

THE DEVELOPMENT of the
SHARON PUBLIC SCHOOL
SYSTEM

by
Dorothy M. Chase

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DOROTHY M. CHASE

The Town of Sharon

Sharon, Massachusetts

1960



These were the first to come into our possession and
from that time we have had no difficulty in finding

records. These may not be exact, but the policy of the Society to the schools
was to use the funds collected
in the collection box founded in 1767 for the same purpose, except
outside certain limits, the income from which was to be used for school and
religious purposes. Many towns were within the boundaries of Dedham, and the money came from the edge of Sharon. These towns are said
to have amounted to about one thousand dollars. After Stoughton, formerly
called Polkville, voted all thoughts were on July 8, 1767, the last school
to be kept in favor of the district, and education began in the adjacent
town of Sharon.

The first step of a definite appropriation was made in September
1767 when £20 was voted for the support of three schools, a meeting held
at Stoughton. In 1770 the following year, it was voted that "School
be kept in favor of the District", notwithstanding the previous maintenance
with few excepts for less than one hundred and fifty years.

The last account of the Dorchester School Funds was made in 1776
when Stoughton received £197, 10s and Dorchester £148, 11, 6d. Stoughton
was discharged from all of his of money
lot near Braintree and the Newes Farm.
a committee chose for that purpose in 1779 £40
from the sale of the school
house farm in Dedham was sold by

Sharon still receives the annual sum from the Dorchester & Surplus
Revenue Fund, established in 1820 at \$3,100. Before that date, trustees were
elected at each annual Town Meeting, who usually weighed the probate and



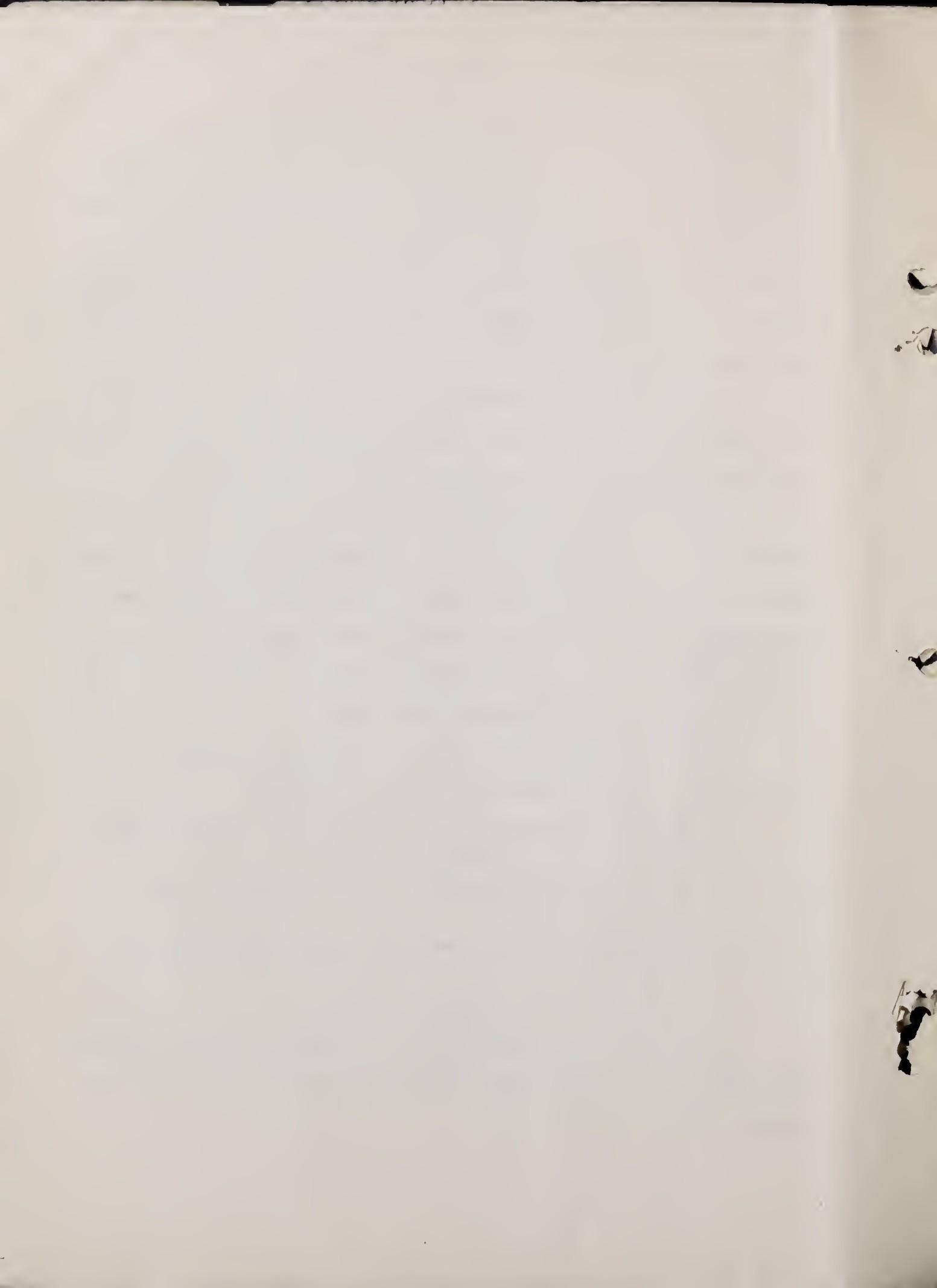
years of public concern, given them over遗留于 the
1800's when the funds of certain schools were paid. How the funds are
kept in various towns and the annual interest passes directly into the Town
and Deficiency Fund of the town, not to the S. & C. Similar disposition
is made of the interest of the Sharon Friends School Fund and the Euseleth
Griffith Fund of 1800, established in 1805 for the purpose of encouraging
public speaking in the schools.

Perhaps because of its revenue from the school lands, the town was
not always conspicuously generous in its appropriations for education, the
sum dipping on occasion as low as £20 per annum. However, the trend
finally became gradually upward with an annual grant in 1797 of £90. The
grant for the following year for the first time was made in dollars, 250 of
them, an interesting proof of how long British influence persisted after
independence. The creation of the Sharon Friends School Fund in 1826
reflected the feeling of many residents that the school appropriations for
the districts were not sufficient for their needs.

Benjamin Reynolds was very active in obtaining subscriptions,
chiefly among a group of Boston men, on these conditions:

1. Only the interest was to be used; the money to be distributed
equally each year among all districts.
2. The town was not to decrease the rate or source of income
for school purposes.
3. The trustees were to be chosen by ballot at the annual town
meeting.
4. A report was to be kept by the trustees.

The trustees were instructed to obtain additional funds, as opportunity
offered, from the townpeople. The list of donors, read at each town
meeting, is as follows:



Gifts	Boston	\$1000
Andrew Adams	"	100
Eliza Adams	"	"
Noson Adams	"	"
Harriet Adams	"	"
Ladd	"	50
Thomas Adams	"	"
Daniel Adams	"	"
Horatio J. Adams	"	25
Simeon Adams	"	"
Abigail Adams	"	"
Warren Allyn	"	"
James Allyn	"	"
Lewis Allyn	Roxbury	"
Ezra Allyn	"	"
Author Morse	"	"
Edward Aldrich	Cambridge	"
Jabez Aldrich	"	"
John Aldrich	Boston	10
Olive Aldrich	Sharon	50

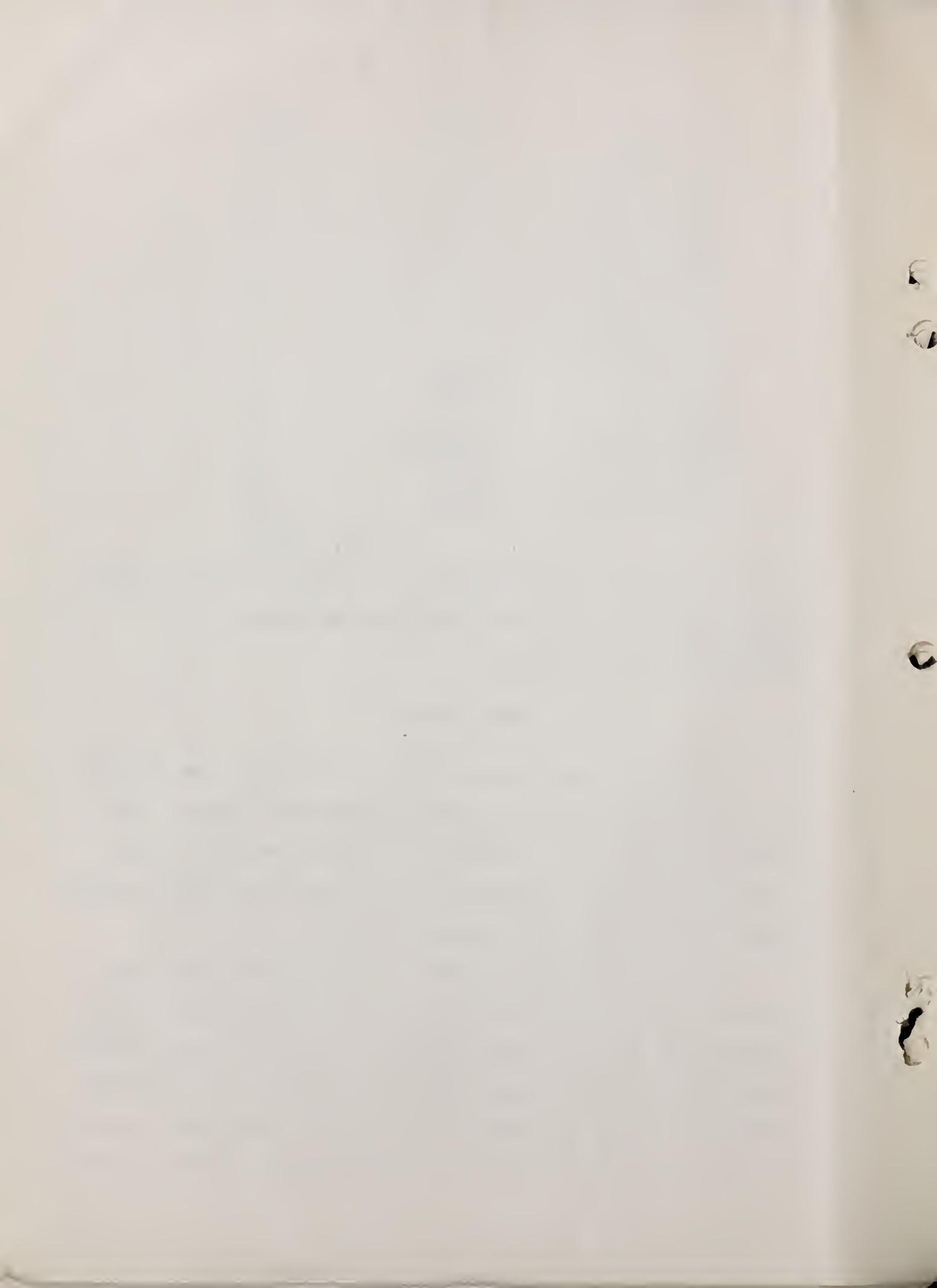
A total of \$1860

The sum was later increased by gifts and legacies with the largest bequest, amounting to \$7151.78, made by George Washington Cary in 1906. The amount of the fund is now \$12,210.

SCHOOL BUILDING

The original school house in Sharon is said to have been on North Main Street on a spot between the houses now owned by Mr. Adams and the Littlefield houses. In it, on June 17, 1775, many of the women and the children of the village are reported to have gathered and watched the smoke rising from Bunker Hill, some remaining all night.

The "Old School House", however, was situated on the northwest corner of the Congregational Church lot. It has been described as "a low, primitive building" in the traditional way. In May, 1776 it was voted that "money may be spent in keeping a writing school in the center of the Town and the other half of said money be spent in ye school divisions as used to be." Mr. Joseph Hawkins, Esq., Mr. Job Swift and Capt. Nathaniel Morse were

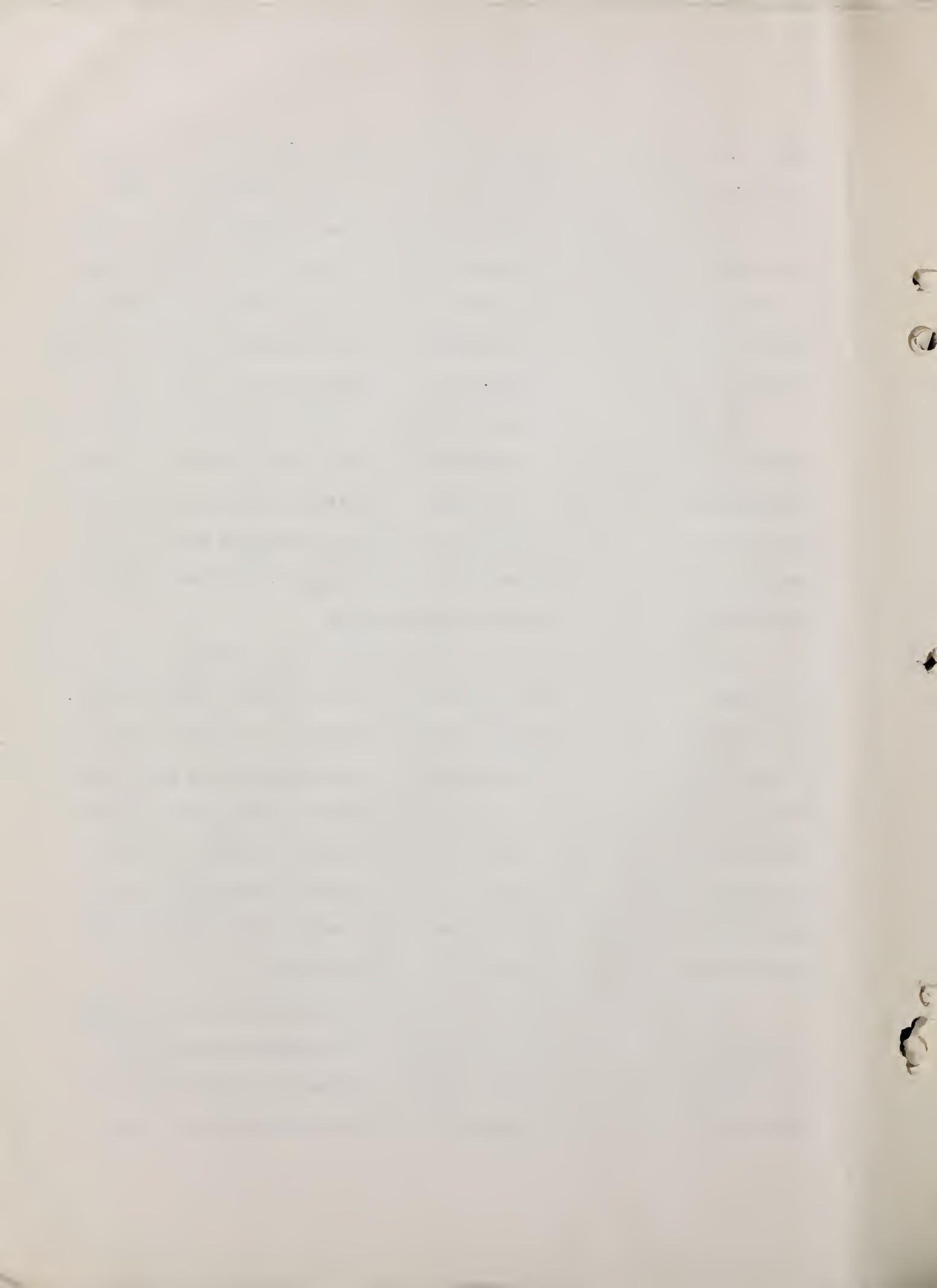


appointed a committee "to pitch on a Spots of Ground in ye center of ye town to erect a School House on and report to them." This building cost £500. After the new school at the corner of School Street and North Main was built about 1860, the old school was removed to Attorney Street where tradition says it forms the second story of the Carter house. It was formerly possible to see the large flat rock near the westerly end of the horse-sheds which formed the base of the chimney. Possibly it is now covered by the Parish House.

The five school districts established in 1766 were allowed their share of the school money in proportion to the tax paid by the residents to the province. It was voted in 1770 that "the easterly side of the part of the district near Taunton Road (now Bay Road) be a particular branch as to Schooling and to enjoy their part of the School money", the first but by no means the last reference to an East Sharon school!

The first East School stood on East Street, some distance beyond the property owned by the Fish and Game Club. This building was destroyed by fire that perhaps was caused by a defective chimney, on March 3, 1877. We shall discuss later the construction of the existing building which was erected upon the same site. The West School became the home of Mrs. Claude Beldon on Moose Hill Street. Only a cellar hole remains to mark the site of the North School, at the corner of Viaduct Street, near the home of Mr. Edmund Brown. The South School was built at the corner of Massapeng Avenue and Mansfield Street, where another cellar hole remains.

In March, 1872, the town had voted that a part of the "school money be disposed of by setting up Women's Schools next summer in ye district." The reference is to the fact that a Master conducted the School during the winter when attendance was large and the number of scholars more or less



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constant, while the poor female teacher was pitted with the problems of good weather conditions. There were two terms of three or four months, with the teacher elected for one term at a time. When it was frankly admitted that a teacher who proved most successful during the summer term might fail miserably during the winter term.

In 1781 it was voted that each original district should furnish its own schoolhouse and firewood, the practice followed for many years thereafter.

Frequently, the master of the Centre School was the preacher. The town meeting in 1799 did not hesitate to express its dissatisfaction with the Rev. Jonathan Whittaker of Harvard who too frequently sent his pupils chasing the Morine ship which he was raising!

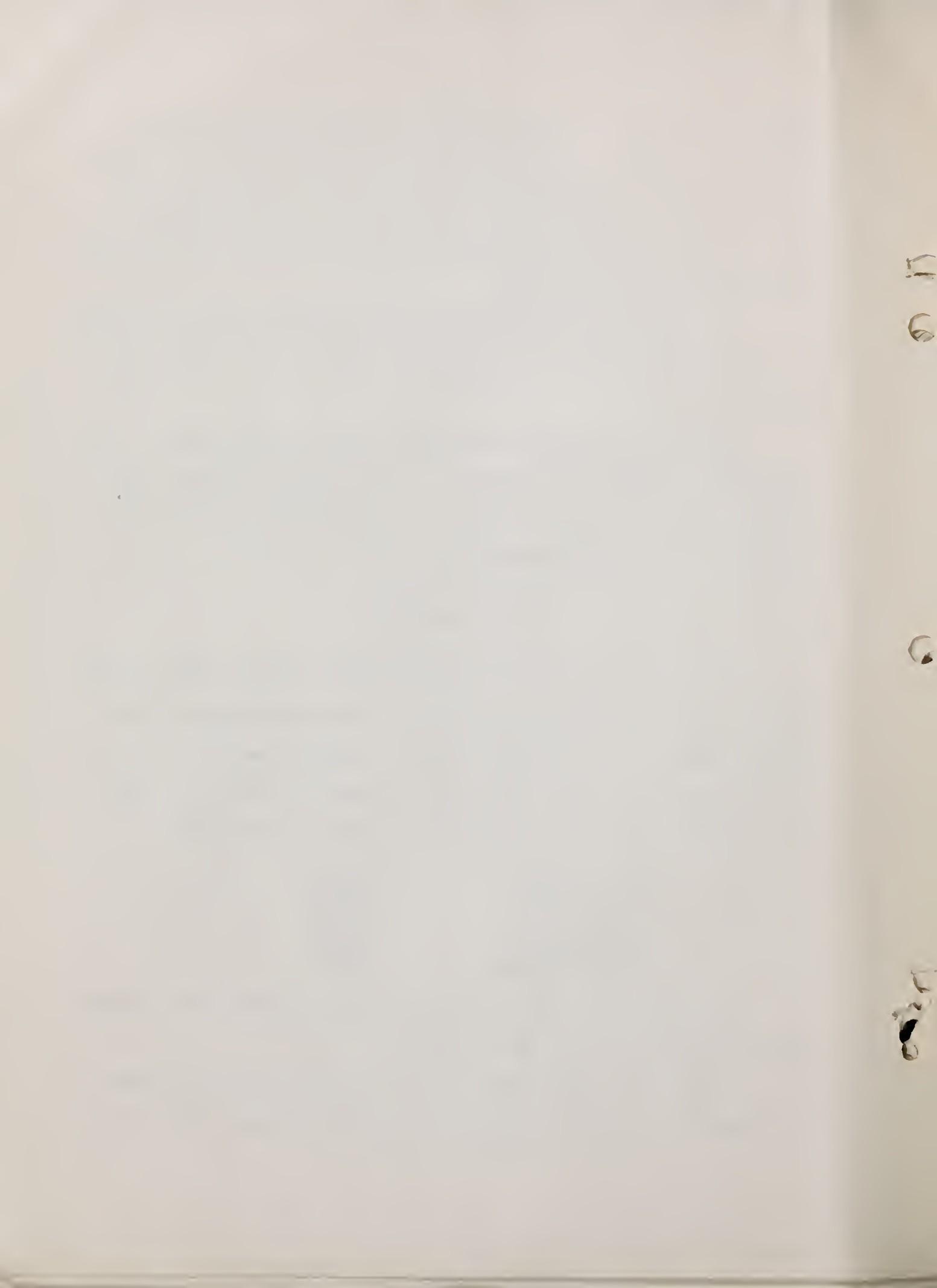
THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The first School Committee was elected by the town in 1827 but each district continued to have its own prudential committee charged with the responsibilities of maintaining the school, hiring the teacher, etc. It was the essential function of the School Committee to allocate the funds among the districts and the expenditures for 1830 are interesting:

Centre School	\$147.27
South School	109.85
West School	104.40
North School	103.06
East School	100.00
School Committee	16.42

By 1836 however, the total appropriated had risen to \$700 and there were gradual but steady increases thereafter.

The earliest extant report of the School Committee was submitted "agreeably to the provisions of the act of the 13th of April, 1833." The



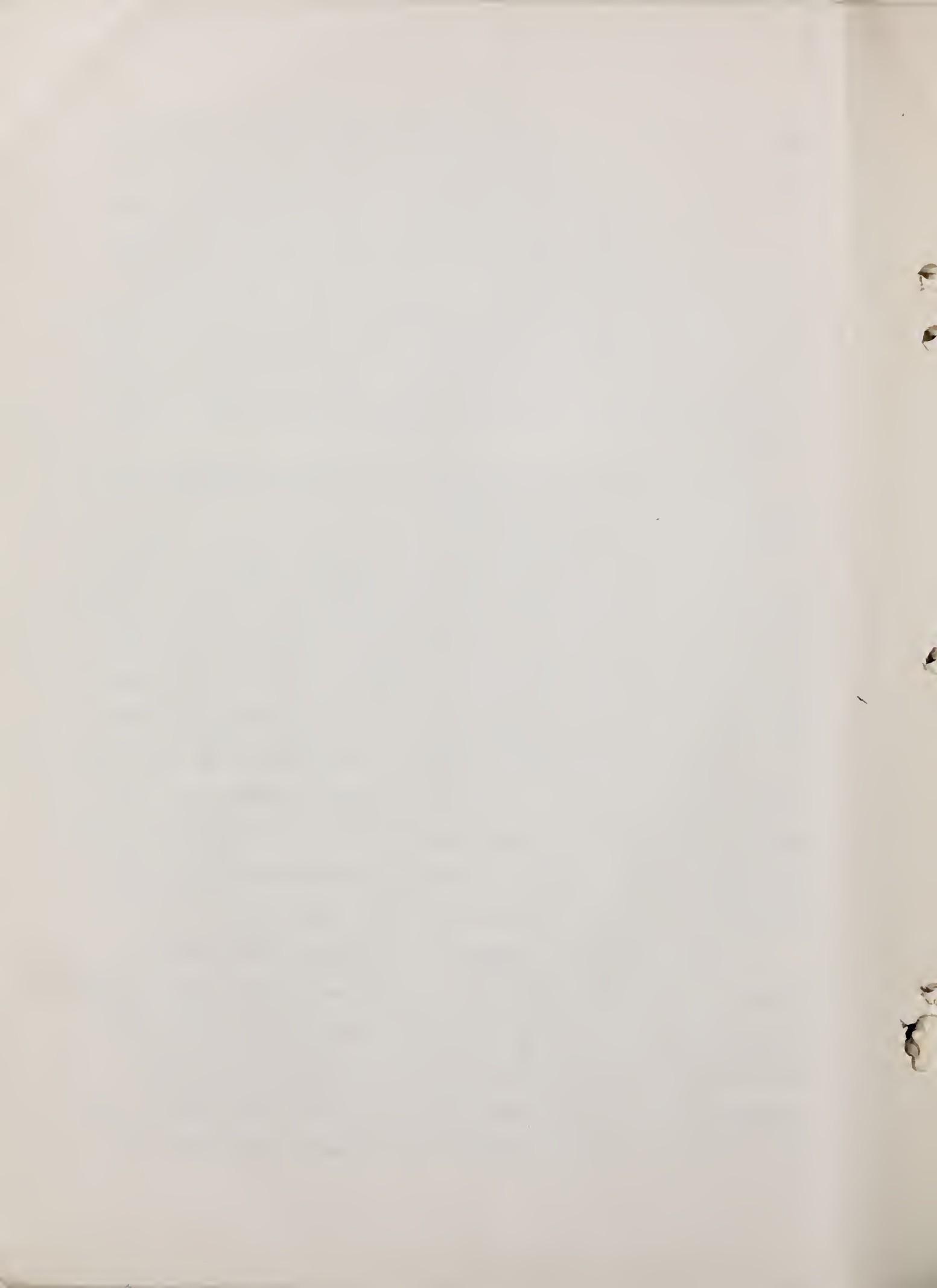
Committee was "happy to say that no harm was done with the nearly unanimous adoption of the committee's resolution directing districts to have found your four subjects adequate to the mental wants of the schools, and not a few of the citizens interested in our means of education." "Now, the branches successfully taught and studied in our schools ----- may be mentioned Orthography, Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Geography, Grammar, Natural and Intellectual Philosophy, the Book of Nature Watts (sic) on the mind, Algebra, Chemistry, Astronomy, Penmanship, Rhetoric and Composition, together with the Latin language."

Probably the staggered townspeople needed to be reminded that not all these were studied by every scholar!

There appeared "among the children and wards a desire to climb the hill of science, though mount on mount doth higher rise, so great the eagerness to grasp one science after another that it has been with difficulty scholars have been detained to perfect themselves in the more simple and easy, before attending to the more difficult." What a Utopian situation!

It was in that year that teachers were furnished by the State with "blank forms of a register", to aid the committee 'and others in town in knowing the correct state of the school, the punctuality of attendance, the daily exercises of the school, the correctness and incorrectness of the recitations", the beginning of all too familiar "paper work."

In the employment of teachers, all remarks and questions were avoided that savored of sectarianism, certificates of moral character only being required. Unfortunately, some of the candidates for teaching positions had to be rejected because they were not fully acquainted with elementary studies, but the Committee expressed itself satisfied with its final selection. No wonder how satisfied the teachers themselves were.



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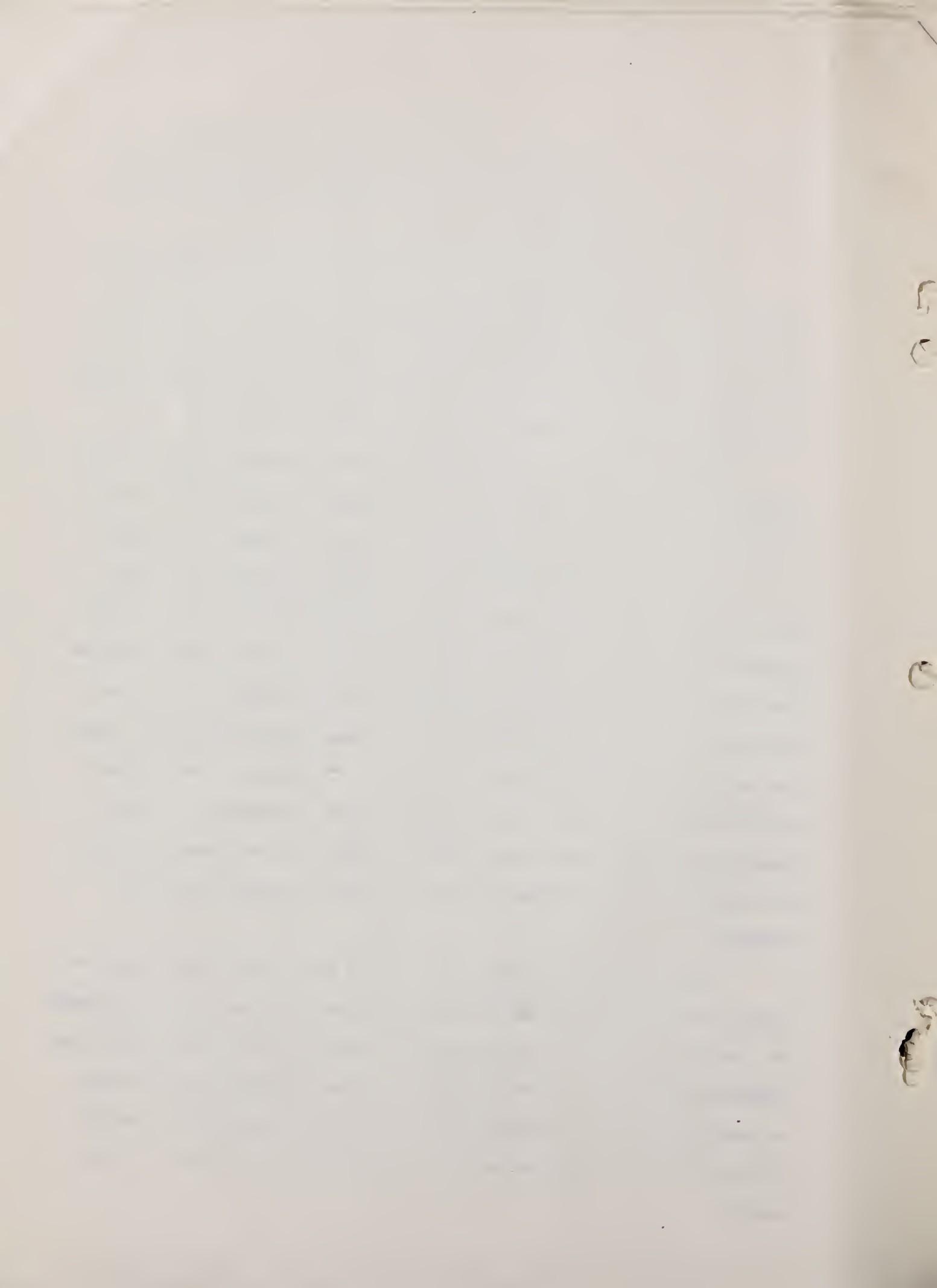
Miss Chickering, received wages of \$25 a month, and \$10 for board out-of-pocket, succeeding her for the winter term in the same school, received wages of \$28 a month with \$6 for board.

From the author's days we find attendance of scholars the greatest problem of the schools. Staggering figures were compiled in this first printed report. The total days of absence in the five schools amounted to 2752 days, or divided by the 287 school days in a year, more than one and a half year of absence. Furthermore, there were 230 tardinesses.

Sharon's attempt appropriate for each child between 4 and 16 years of age and was justly proud of standing 50th among the 106 towns of the state in liberality in granting money for the support of schools.

In 1818 the Committee was justly exercised by the state of the school houses. They agreed that a school house should "be spacious, well lighted, well warmed, well ventilated, supplied with a recitation room, and also with such out-buildings as necessity and decency require." Yet two buildings completely lacked the latter provision, while at the South School the underpinnings had been nearly all removed. The seats for the largest pupils were "but ten inches wide, almost perfectly horizontal, and the backs about sixteen inches high, nearly perpendicular; we wonder that more of those who have been obliged to sit upon such seats have not become deformed."

Accused by the Town Meeting of 1850 of being "if not arbitrary, at least injudicious," the Committee resigned en masse but not without presenting a spirited defense of its actions, attacking the irresponsibility of the Prudential Committees. Their unhappy experience undoubtedly prompted the succeeding Committee to publish the shortest annual report of the century, omitting the usual outspoken comments upon the failure or success of each teacher.



To a historian these frank analyses of the management of each school during such term are fascinating. During the plights of poor Miss Brown who was warned after two weeks of service that unless improvements were obvious in a week, she would lose her position, Miss Brown resigned at the end of two days. Perhaps she found slight consolation in the fact that her successor lasted for two and a half days. Of course, many of the reports are gratifying:

"Mr. Kimball is a gentleman of rare talents, and is a man disciplined to the closest investigation, and no subject with which he deals is allowed to pass without thorough analysis and understanding."

Miss King's discipline was mild yet efficient; obedience seeming to be secured more by love than fear....The order and deportment of the School were excellent, and....the closing examination before a large and highly gratified audience showed that....good progress had been....well made in all the branches taught."

"The teacher not only taught well, but exerted a marked, salutary, moral influence upon the minds and hearts of her pupils, and proved herself well-qualified in all respects to fill the station of a teacher."

Or did the townspeople read and remember comments like these?

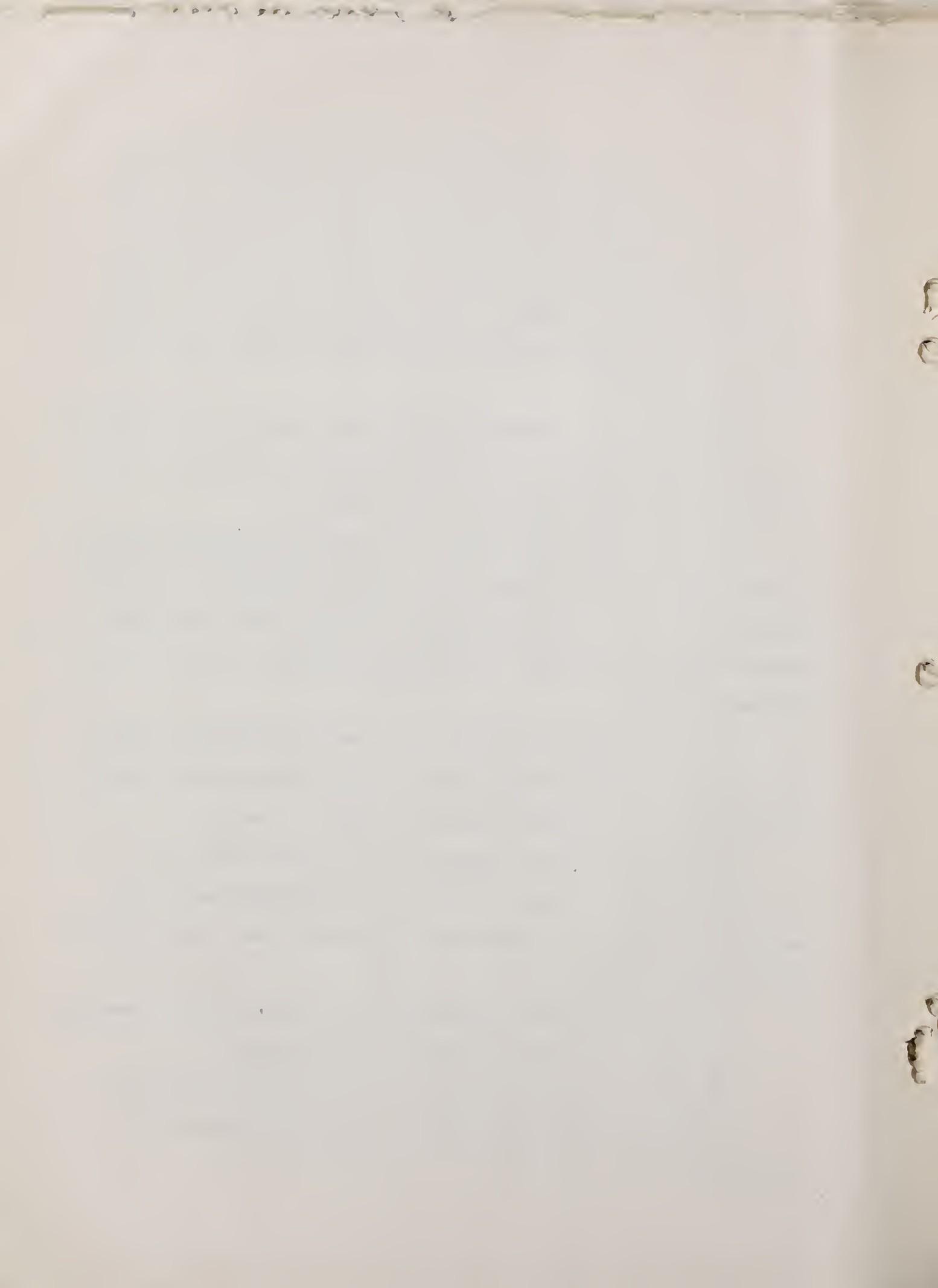
"Had the teacher been as accurate in her scholarship as she was energetic and zealous in her management, she would have made a very desirable and successful instructor."

"At the close of school, great disorder and insubordination prevailed."

"We regret to say that the progress was indifferent."

"The great defect seemed to be a lack of professional enthusiasm."

"We have no doubt that under better auspices Miss Jones would succeed well."



Reportedly we find the highest praise bestowed upon a teacher, only to be followed by the sad comment that the parents keep their children at home during the latter part of the term and emotionally undid all the good work accomplished earlier. Happily, however, the following is the most common type of report: "The order was good, and the classes made excellent proficiency in all the studies to which they attended. We think the district were well satisfied; the committee certainly were."

By 1855, the annual appropriation had risen to \$1000 and the Committee proudly wrote: "The Common Schools are the pride of New England because they afford to every child, whether rich or poor, the opportunity of acquiring a common English education."

Mrs. Elizabeth M. Billings, in 1904, wrote her recollections of her schooling in the '40's.

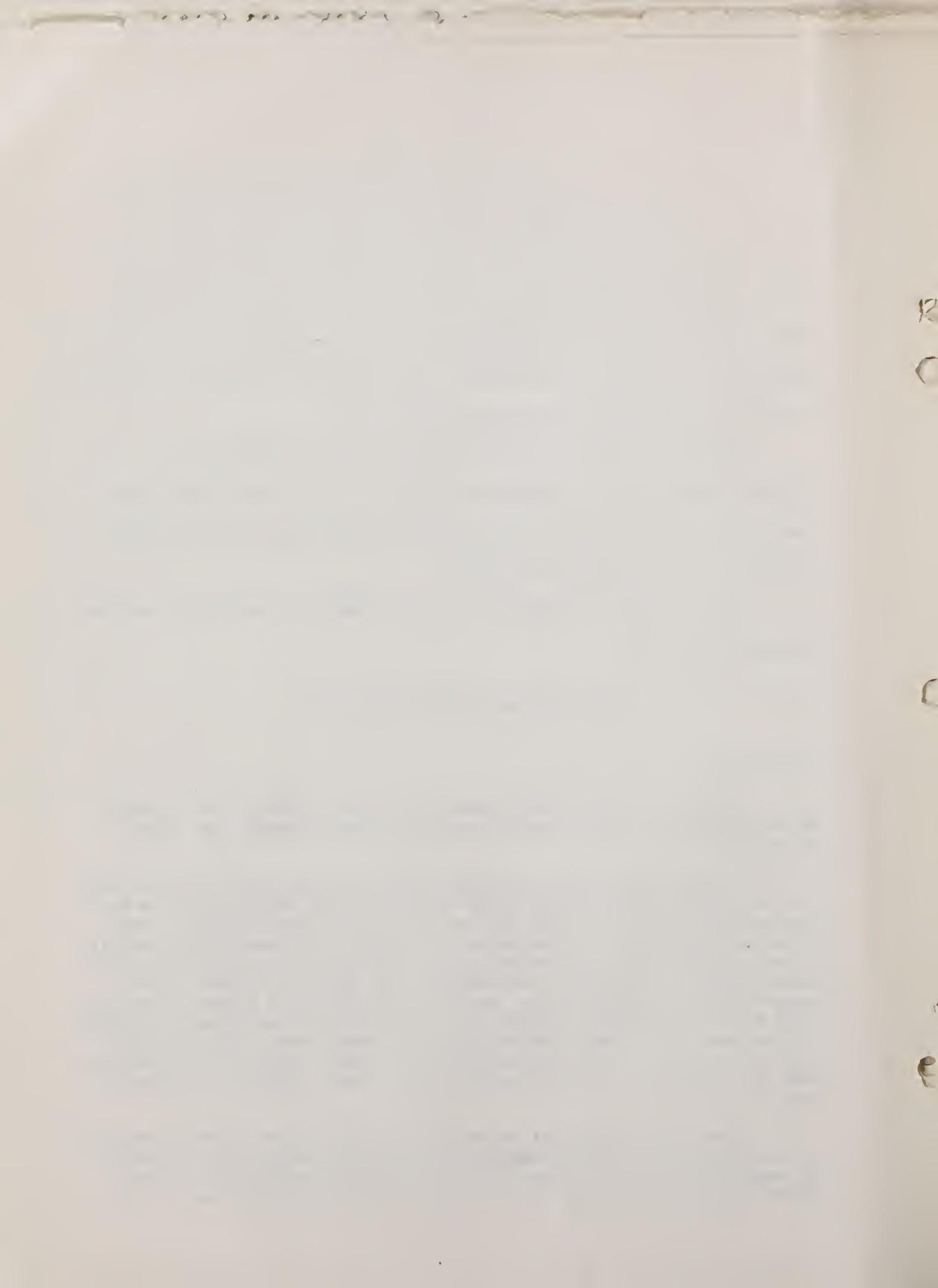
A SOUTH SHARON SCHOOL RECOLLECTION

Scrapbook I

"Among my earliest recollections is the old school house at South Sharon which stood on the same site as the present structure (no longer standing).

"It was a rough looking building devoid of paint both inside and out. There was a long seat running around the sides of the building and the boys used to bring big logs of wood from the woodpile for footstools for themselves and the girls. Into these small quarters were crowded sixty pupils, for the families were large in those days. There was the Tisdale family of eleven children, the Howards, the Dunbars, the Morses, the Drakes two brothers with ten children each, and the Tolman family of nineteen children. Those fathers showed their appreciation of the value of an education in the efforts they made to send their children to school. When the snowdrifts were so high as to render the roads almost impassable, they would yoke their oxen to a sled and take their own and perhaps their neighbors' children to school.

"The school master, as he was termed in those days, used to send one of the boys out to the woods nearby to cut a sapling to be used on himself for some misdemeanor or on one of his companions. Sometimes it was the ferule instead of the stock and it would strike terror to our hearts when



the teacher and myself, we were deciding which would be master. This ferule would sometimes come down with wonderful force upon the desk, and all might well be glad that it was the desk that received the blow and not their hand.

"William Garrison Alden, Dr. Alden's son, pastor of the Disciples Church in Sharon, who taught the school in one of the forties, then a youth of nineteen, was one who ruled by love and not by the rod. I remember how interminably long the days seemed as the little children were kept the whole six hours and the parting class, composed of men and women as it then seemed to us, was looked forward to each day because it was almost the last recitation before the school would be dismissed. The school committee would often drop in, sometimes by twos, sometimes by threes, and one would come in lightly on tiptoe, apparently to surprise all. They were all expected to make remarks at the close of the session. The clergymen often served in this capacity.

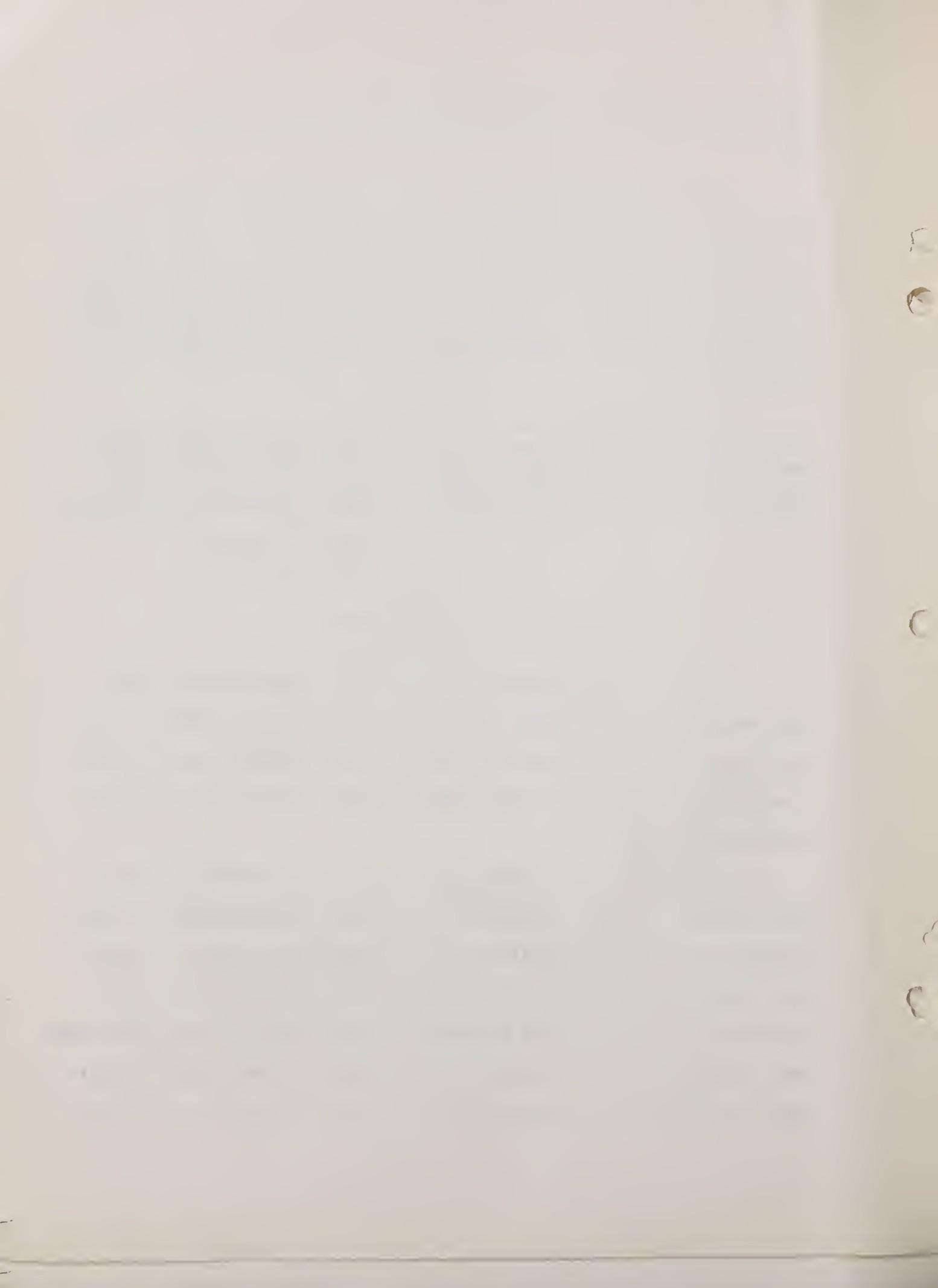
"We recall the woods near by where we made play houses with stones, with the leaves of the oak tree for carpets, the spring a short distance away which supplied the school with water, with the tall tree on the hill above it where we often ate our dinners; the great rock in the pasture climbed by so many feet - all these and many other pictures crowd our memory.

Elizabeth L. Billings
March 31, 1904

SHARON UNDER A SUPERINTENDENT

The first Superintendent of Schools was employed in 1860. That same year another attempt was made to eliminate the district schools. Perhaps it was under his guidance that the School Committee was organized with a Chairman and a Secretary. They needed organization to cope with the case of Benjamin Reynolds.

Although the teacher during the summer term at the Centre had been "very ladylike and mild, yet firm and determined," her male successor during the winter term found his position "one of extreme toil, trial, and perplexity." Benjamin, the oldest boy and "the one who stood most in the way of the (school's) prosperity" was dismissed, with the sanction of the Superintendent. The parents raised no apparent objection but sent Benjamin to the East School in defiance of the regulation that a child must attend school in his



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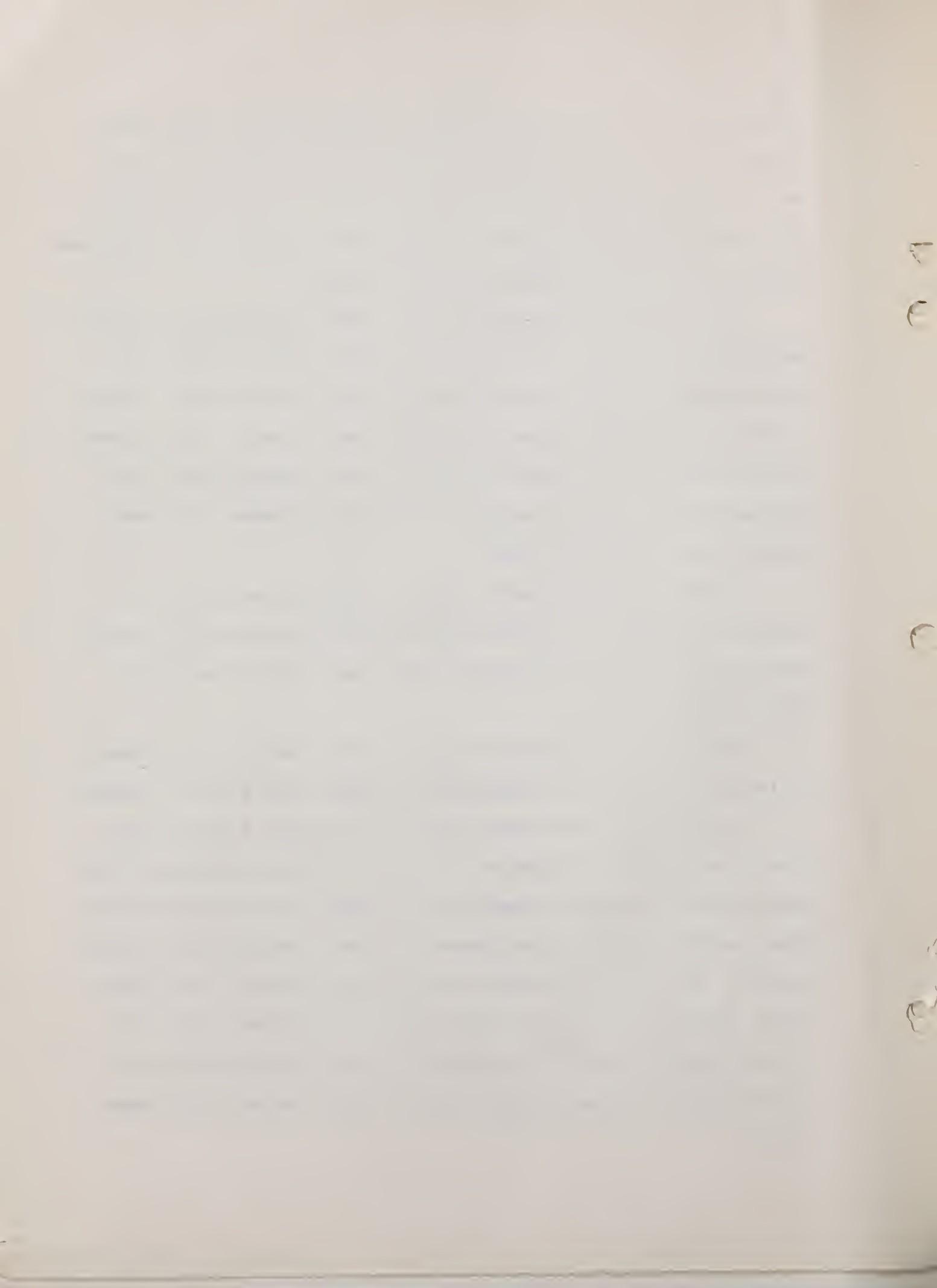
own district. The Committee then dismissed subjects from the each school but since he continued to leave and his popularity of the district supported him in his refusal, the outcome was that the Central teacher left, feeling justly that the attitude of parents to support with a Committee of Superintendent made it impossible for him to maintain authority.

The Committee in 1862 called to the attention of parents once again, the attendance situation. In two of the schools, so many children were being dismissed, especially from the afternoon sessions, that out of 40 and 26 scholars respectively, often there remained only 15 and 6. It was found frequently that a forged request for dismissal was presented and parents were reminded that "such forgery is an advanced step toward a dishonest character and a dishonorable life."

In 1864 the Superintendent ruefully reported his difficulty in securing able teachers. He found their 'qualifications withered away when brought into the air of Sharon school rooms,' but admitted that "school (is) no bed of roses."

That same year an innovation was introduced which brought immediate and successful results - the words were pronounced before and after spelling.

In 1861 Mr. Sanford Waters Billings had founded a private school known as the Stoughterham Institute, located in the house on Billings Street owned by Miss Ethel Saver. When the annual report was printed in 1866, the School Committee commented with pleasure upon the prestige gained for public education. More efficient teachers applied for positions and the scholars felt an incentive to aspire to higher learning. The following year Mr. Billings, already a member of the Committee, was elected Secretary and it is interesting to compare the style of his reports with that of his predecessors.



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In the days of yore, in January, 1871, the scholars in the Institute composed a poem written about their classes and from which a few lines are quoted:

53 It is said
All sizes and
Some look pale
But all, who
is one number all told,
or lexions, some young and some old,
and pretty, some sober and wise
and judge, look straight out of their eyes.

Just as from
Miss Adams &
But hold on
I've their p
of these two, if their seats are not changed,
Johnson are quietly arranged.
Stop a moment, is it not I say?
dion to ask, for they are always at play.

Miss Walker,
In French she
And wo'd no
For she can
she is a gem among band
is splendid, in rhetoric grand -
be surprised if she makes something great,
from good stock in the old Nutmeg State.

But our time
Not forgett' sir, short, we must hasten our song,
& mention Mr. Frederic Long.

Now we've met
On us all we
We've the kin
Happy School

tioned them all from beginning to end,
the richest of blessings descend.
rest of teachers, both noble and true,
happy Teacher, we bid you adieu.

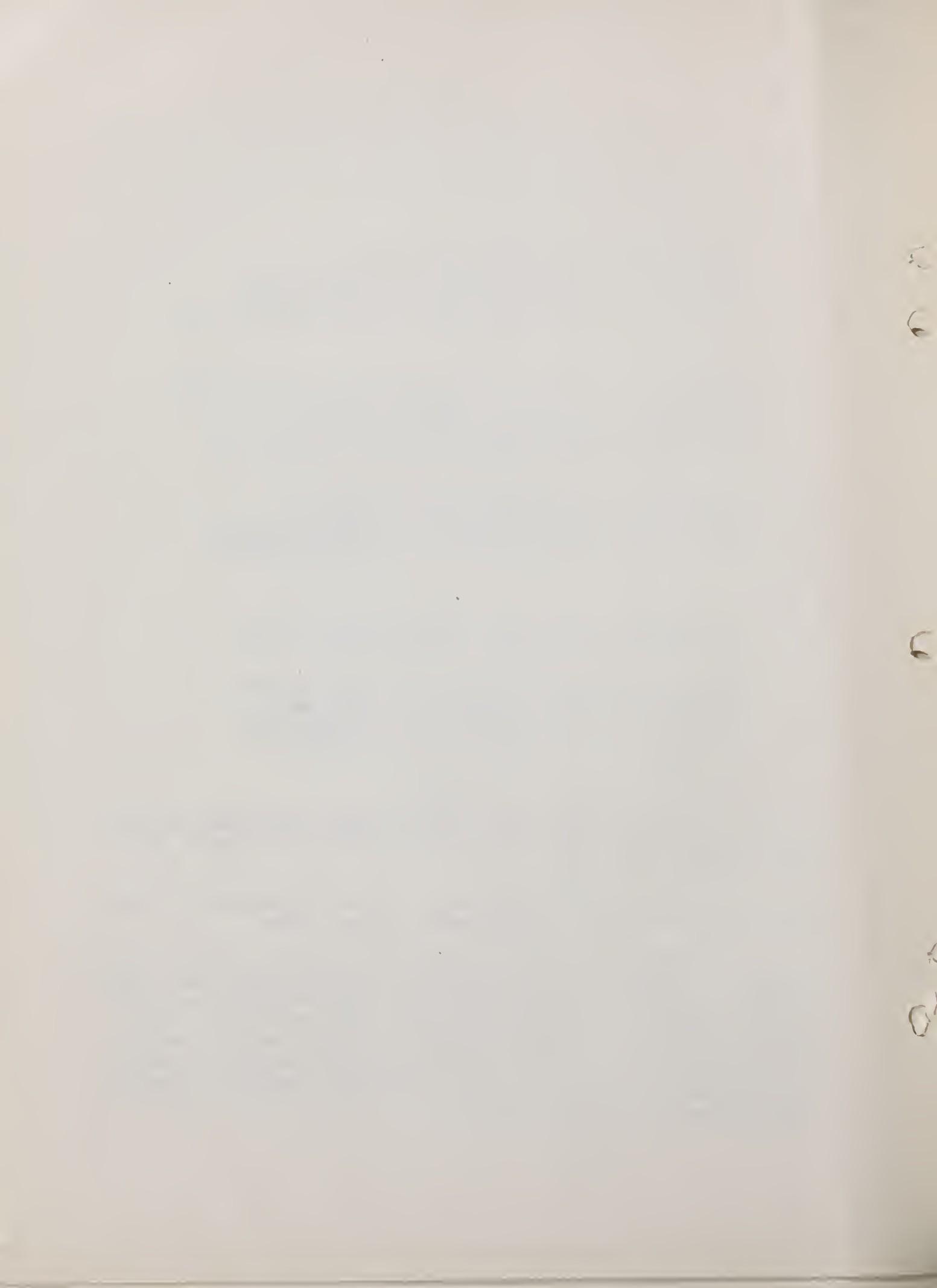
In 1904 Mrs. Anna M. Eddy wrote:

"It is with
Sharon. The pleasant
happy moments spent

days that I recall my early school days at North
walks through woods and fields in going and the
here

"How well I
such teachers as Rod
member the faces of the school committee----and
my Capen who need no praise of mine.

"I shall never forget our last spelling, school. We were to spell
against the Brick School which (sic) was then in South Dedham then called
was then Rodney Capen. The north school stood the
on Newes one of the scholars of the Brick School
her's spell. Rodney Capen spelt the other teacher
over the Brick School teacher asked Mr. Capen where
he said, 'To the Stoughtonham Institute,' then his
I had known that I shouldn't have tried to spell with
leaving to us all."



beginning in 1870, a village function, so named, especially as Secretary and at superintendant of the schools, a position which he held until April 3, 1871, when his succession was formally entrusted to an appointed supervisor.

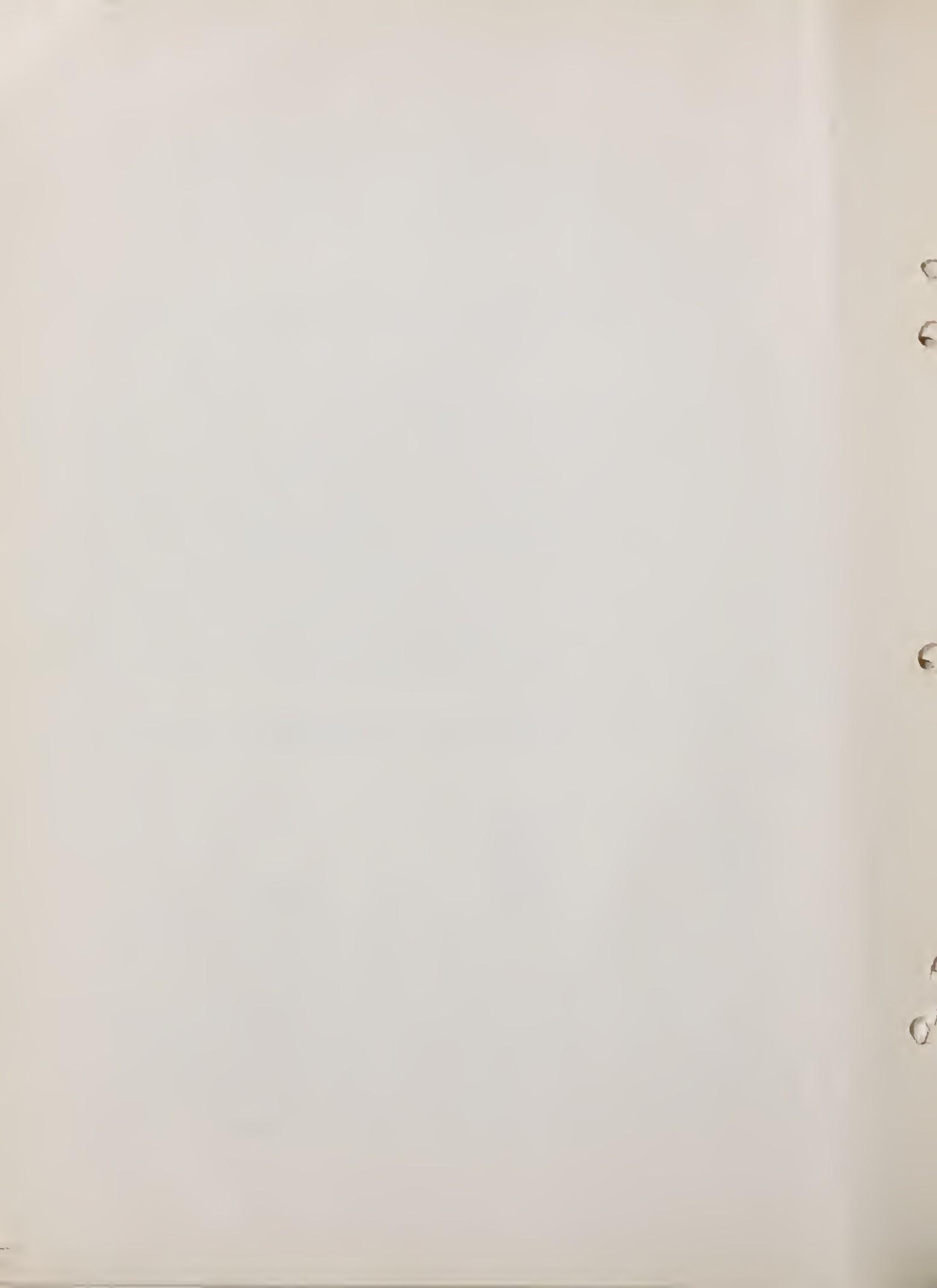
It was recommended shortly after 1867 that the districts be given up since their retention would mean a loss of "a large sum of money from the state" - \$75. At a meeting, the town voted to abolish the district system with the Prudential Committee and all schools were placed completely under the control of a School Committee. The Committee went on record as opposing corporal punishment except as a last resort. The schools adopted the use of lead pencils for beginners rather than pen and ink. The old West School was torn down and a house constructed upon its site and a new building was erected. Poor Miss Holden found that "the driving of teams and the noise incident to them often distracted the attention of the pupils and sadly interfered with the school."

Early in 1869 the property of the various districts was appraised as follows:

Centre	\$4833.44
North	881.42
South	859.50
East	1528.35
West	2659.00
	Total \$9811.81

The pay range at the time was from \$28 to \$60 a month, the teachers still being employed for a term of eleven or twelve weeks.

Unfortunately there were in Sharon "Some... who hesitate not to mark, cut, and deface." Those delinquents were not looking to their teachers to be examples of "piety, justice, humanity, benevolence, chastity, moderation, sobriety, industry, frugality," but several pupils had joined the temperance



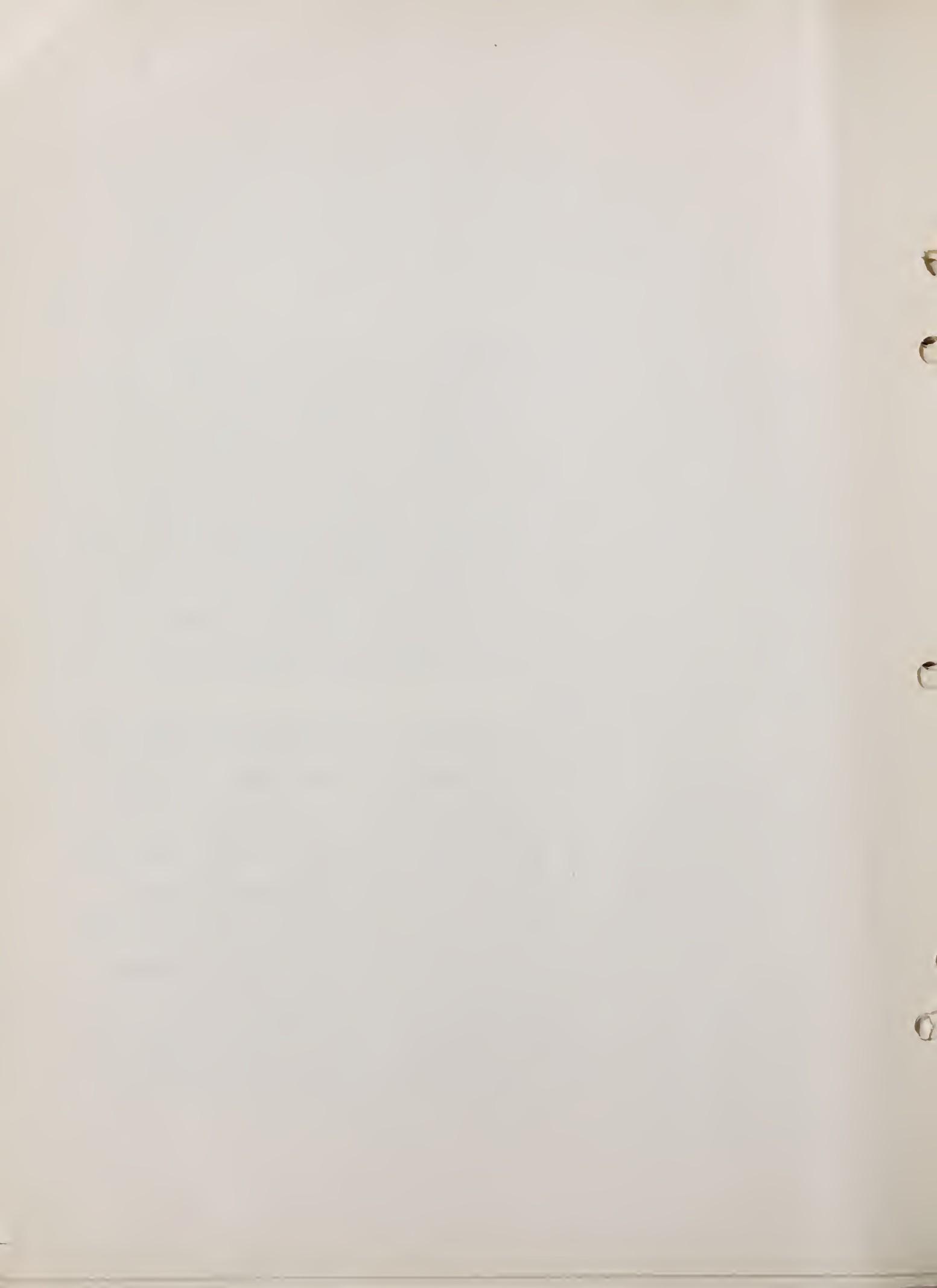
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population forced to do without. This plan of regulation required abstinance from the use of tobacco, as well as intoxicating liquors, and no wife or mother every member of society would during the year 1870, have been a faithful keeper of such a plan of conduct, especially to a clause pertaining to tobacco." No. 1011, p. 10.

1873 marks an important milestone in the history of the Sharon schools. Bradford was no longer, finding time among all his other responsibilities to serve as a member of the Grand and General Court, was largely instrumental in having the state legislation passed which authorized local school committees to buy books "to be the property of the town and to be loaned to the children." Sharon has the distinction of being not only the first town in Massachusetts to take advantage of the enabling act but the only town in the state to take action that year. And the Committee could proudly report to the town at the next term meeting that scarcely one book was defaced with personal marks.

The Committee was deeply concerned by the fact that only 60% of the children were attending school for an average of seven months, although in general, nine months of schooling was provided. But when the number increased to 7/8ths there was such a shortage of space that it was found necessary to move the upper classes to Mr. Billings' Steoughtonham Institute.

By 1876, when there were 70 grammar scholars with an average attendance of 90% and 53 in the primary school in the centre with the unusually high attendance of 95%, the Committee seriously suggested that some of the pupils be "ordered to desist from the Primary School." Sharon was the only town in the vicinity without a high school - something must be done about this definite need.



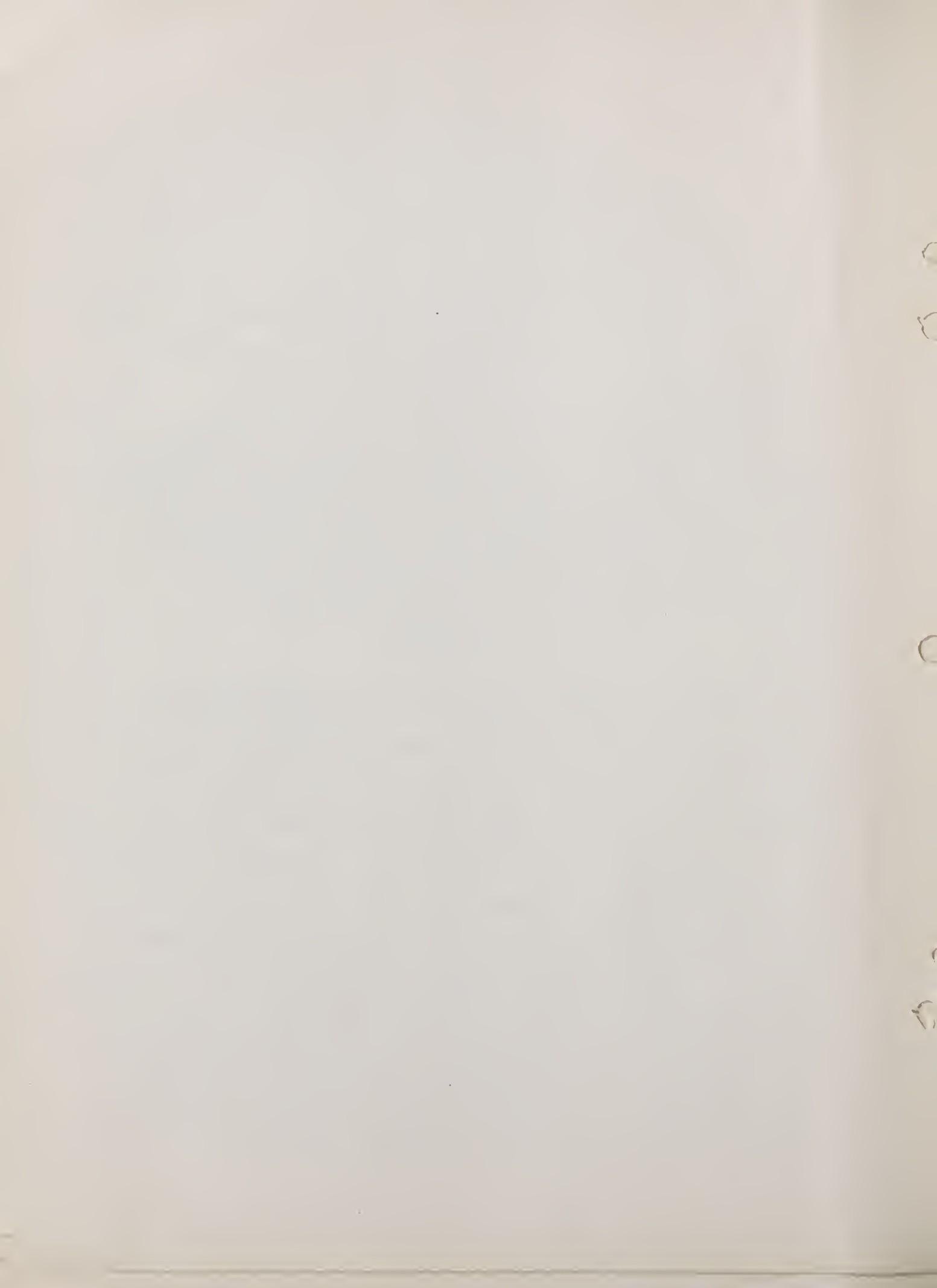
Subscription money was collected at the High School of \$1.
doct of \$100. A new history book, "American Colonies," was purchased
and Monroe's "School Reader" and Willard's "Reader" were adopted in the schools.
The textbooks would not go so very well however, but it was hoped that "the
publishing houses would soon have a plan of ~~books~~ binding." The friends of
the schools were requested to have a "spirit-finishing, curving, creaking
spirit...a spirit that would be a rebellion to others and
countenance opposition to the just requirements of a teacher."

Three terms were still being used - the fall term beginning on the
Monday after Sept. 1, the winter term on the Monday after Thanksgiving,
and the spring term on April 1, but two teacher were now hired for the
year. The only holidays observed were the last day of the County Fair,
Christmas Day, Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, and June 17.

THE HIGH SCHOOL

1877 was a busy year. First of all, the second East School was
built at a cost of \$1,654.20, including the desks, seats, stove,
steps, grading, fence, power, and hitching post. Also undoubtedly other
appurtenances. Considered with the new first Elementary School appropriation!

In March '76 had been appropriated for the expenses of a committee
of five to investigate the need of a high school and to report at the next
year's town meeting. But the situation was critical and the Committee
reported at a special meeting in November. By vote of the town on November 6
a High School was established and on Thursday, December 13 an examination
of candidates for admission was held. 37 of 45 applicants were admitted,
with 5 added later as the result of a second examination. The papers per-
taining to United States history were completely omitted in determining the



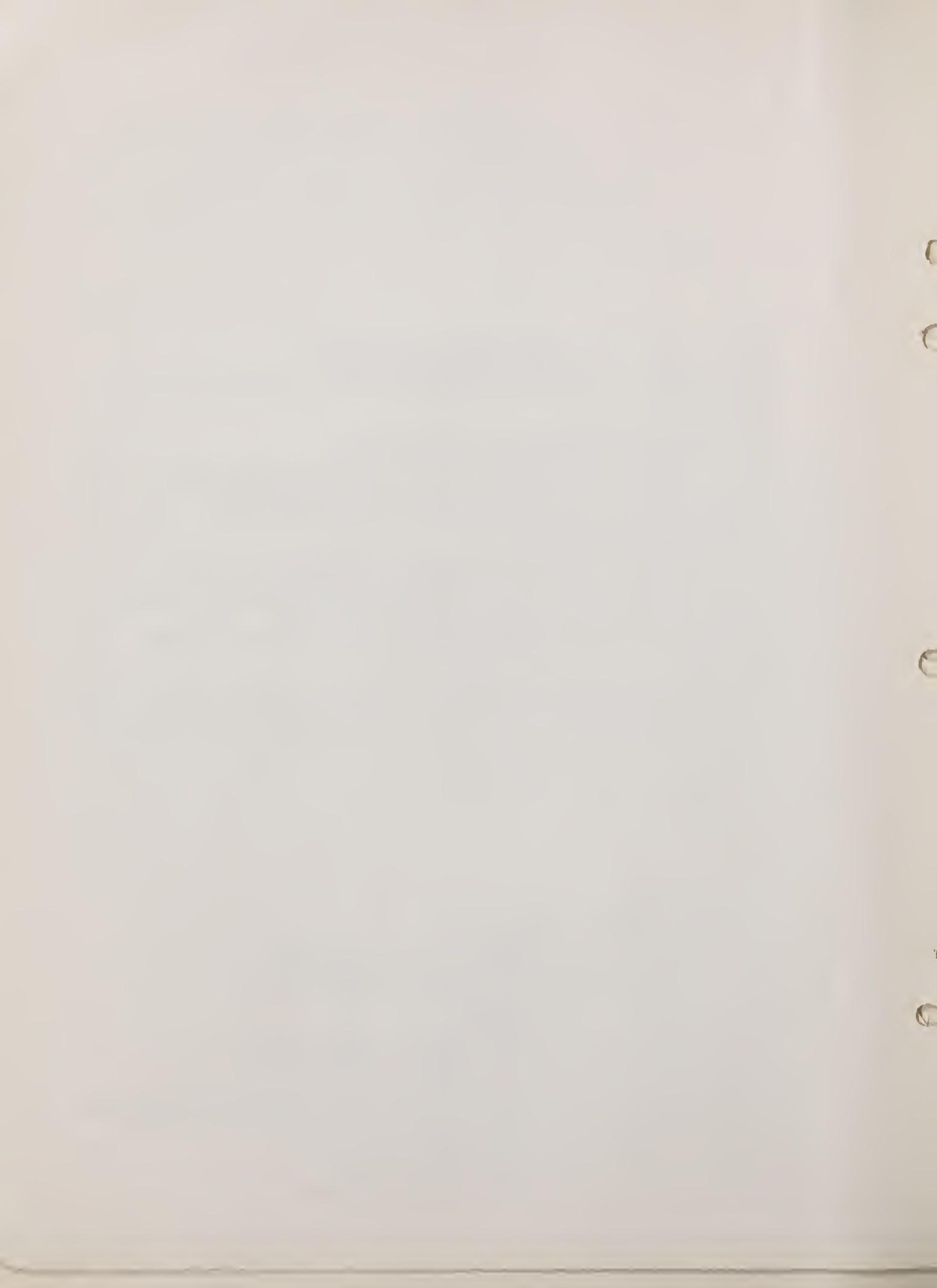
standards for admission to the teacher's desk. In most cases, we must do, and when there was a question about any answer, the child was allowed to repeat his work, reasoning over it. Test yourself on these questions, ready?

ARITHMETIC

1. What are the four principal rules of arithmetic?
2. Give the proof of multiplication and division.
3. Define a proper fraction, an improper fraction, and give an example of each.
4. What is a mixed number?
5. What is the sum of $8\frac{1}{2}$ and $5\frac{3}{4}$ and $10\frac{1}{2} - 2\frac{1}{2}$?
6. What is a decimal fraction?
7. Express in figures one million six hundred eight billionths.
8. Multiply sixty-two thousand and two hundredths by forty-four hundredths.
9. Multiply 724,900 by .08.
10. Divide 38706.78 by 50.151.
11. How many acres in a plot of land 120 rods long by 80 rods wide?
12. Define a square or a cube. Is a cord of wood a cube?
13. What are the contents of a pile of wood measuring 68 feet in length, 4 feet in width, and 2 feet in height?
14. If a horse is bought for \$100 and sold for \$200, what is the gain per cent?
15. Define interest principal, rate, amount.
16. Find the interest on \$100 for 1 year, 6 months, 12 days, at 7% per annum.
17. Define Compound interest.
18. What will \$275 amount to in 3 years, 6 months at 6 per cent, compound interest.
19. Write a promissory note on demand.
20. Add $\frac{3}{8}$ and $\frac{7}{11}$ and $\frac{5}{9}$.

GEOGRAPHY

1. Define geography and give its uses.
2. Define the equator and longitude.
3. Define latitude and the spherical form of the earth.
4. Give two proofs of the spherical form of the earth.
5. Number of States and Territories in the United States.
6. Give the New England States and their capitals.
7. Name three rivers of New England.
8. Give five branches of the Mississippi River.
9. Name the largest river in range of the United States.
10. What is the source of the Mississippi River?
11. What States are west of the Rocky Mountains?
12. Give the degree of latitude of Boston; also, longitude from Washington.
13. Give three large rivers of South America.
14. State the positions of Spain, France, and Italy.
15. In what direction is Asia from North America?
16. What rivers in Europe empty into the Arctic Ocean?



GEORGIA PHT (continued)

17. Mention the mountains of Africa.
18. Give six important islands in the Pacific Ocean.
19. Give the boundaries of your State and town.

GRAMMAR

1. Give the divisions of English grammar.
2. Define etymology.
3. Name the parts of speech.
4. Decline man, ox, child, in both numbers.
5. Give the classes of pronouns.
6. Compare good, little, near, bad, much.
7. Correct the following expressions: He done it. She talled me the story. James learned me the exercise.
8. What is a verb?
9. Give the synopsis of the verb walk in all the tenses of the indicative mood.
10. Analyze the sentence: The carpenter built the house last season.
11. Number of parts of speech in the sentence, Sharon is situated in Norfolk County, and their names.
12. Give the plural of penny, axis, cargo, story, valley.
13. Give the difference between a regular and an irregular verb.
14. Parse this sentence: I bought the horse yesterday.
15. Give the names of the moods.
16. Define the tenses.
17. When should capital letters be used?
18. What two words are always written in capitals?
19. What is the difference between an adjective and an adverb?
20. Write a sentence containing all the parts of speech.

The original Building Committee was made an advisory Committee and it seems obvious that friction developed between this Committee and the School Committee when we read this resolution passed at a Special Town Meeting, also in December:

Whereas

"The School Committee has failed to cooperate with the High School Committee at the last November meeting in accordance with the instructions of the town at that meeting

Resolved

"That the town has full confidence in the integrity, ability and desires of the High School Committee and hereby request them to go forward and establish a School at such time and in such way as they judge will be for the best interests of the citizens.

Resolved

"We individuals so hereby pledge them our support to payment of all bills until the annual meeting when we pledge them un-questioned legal authority to act independent of any personal feeling."

One member of the School Committee resigned and an unsuccessful attempt was made at still another special town meeting on January 3, 1878 to rescind the previous vote in regard to the High School. The school was opened on Wednesday, January 9 with the following course of study: "Reading, spelling, arithmetic, English grammar, penmanship, history of the United States, algebra, Latin, with weekly exercises in declamation and composition." The Principal received \$75 a month and Mr. Billings received \$2.50 a week rent for the use of his room.

In 1879 the suggestion was made that members of the School Committee should be made. Since the matter was left to the Committee itself to decide, we can only guess what they may have done with available funds!

Entrance examinations were not given again for the high school until July 7, 1879 when Rev. Henry C. Weston, Superintendent of Schools asked these questions among many others:

ARITHMETIC

What is a prime number? Give the prime numbers between 1 and 20.

Add together $1/4$, $1/5$, $1/6$ and $1/12$ of 300.0

Divide 3000 by $3/1000$.

Bought a farm of 63 acres for \$25 an acre. Sold 2.7 for \$30 an acre, 2.9 for \$32, and the remainder for \$33 per acre. How much was gained.

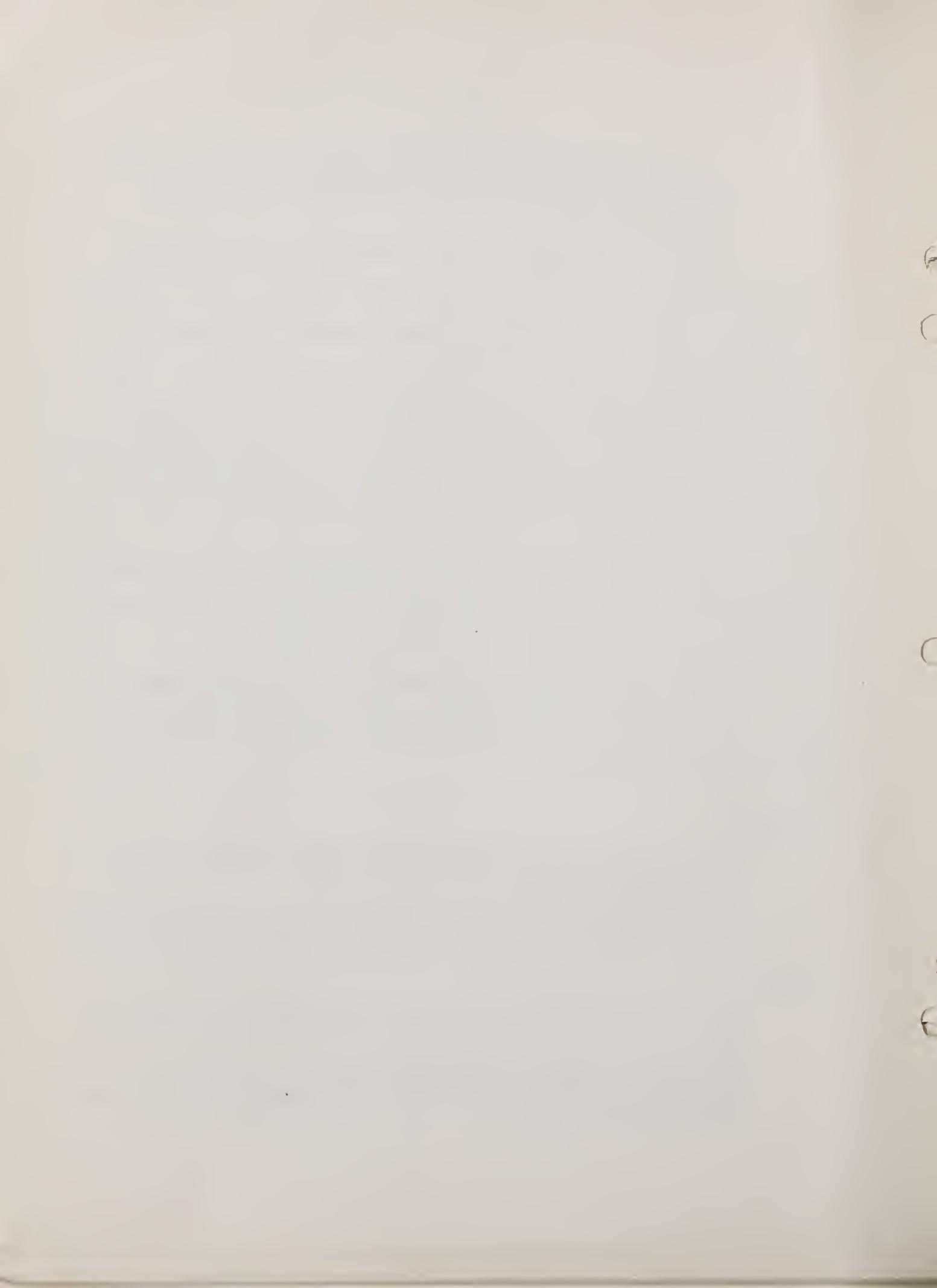
GEOGRAPHY

Name the different races of men and some countries where they each live.

Bound our own state and give its capital.

Pass from New Orleans to Liverpool by water.

Draw an outline of this school room, locating the aisles, the stove, and the teacher's desk.



GRAMMAR

Give the plural of goos, horse, sheep, willy, ill, die, box, negro.

Correct the following sentence: I think William don't try to write good.

Conjugate the verb to be in the indicative mood, past tense.

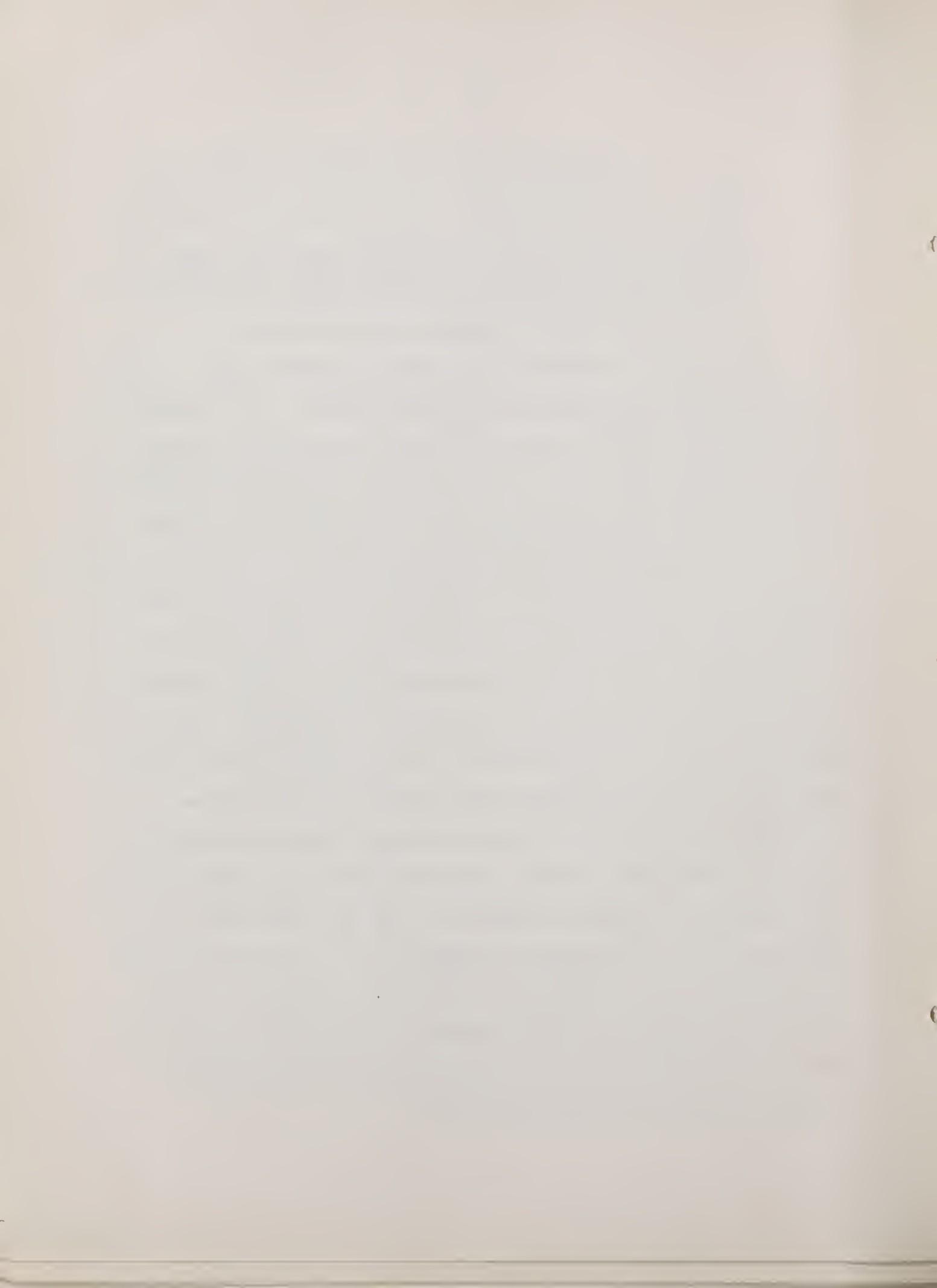
Name the parts of speech in: The pleasant towns around Boston are inhabited chiefly by people who transact business in the city.

The standard of 65% was reached by nineteen candidates.

The teacher was expected to hear twelve recitations a day. Because of "an unfounded prejudice against the Latin language", it was impossible to make the subject required, although this would have reduced the teaching load to only ten classes a day. And the Committee regretfully decided that the teacher would have to get along a while longer without an assistant.

In 1880 the town finally adopted Truant Laws, availing itself of state statutes. Article 2 states that "All children between the ages of seven and fifteen years, residing in said town, and who may be found wandering about in the streets or public places of said town, having no lawful occupation or business, not attending school, and growing up in ignorance, shall be committed to the truant school at Lowell, for confinement, instruction and discipline." Two truant officers were appointed to enforce the law.

Previously, the suggestion had been made that one building be erected to combine the town offices, library, school, and lockup - not such a bad idea. The teachers naturally were minded that it was still their duty "to enforce punctuality and regularity of attendance, and to preserve good order and discipline." Any scholar absent or late three times a term without excuse was reported to the School Committee. Examinations were held during the last two weeks of each term and anyone absent was examined by the Committee before he could rejoin the school.

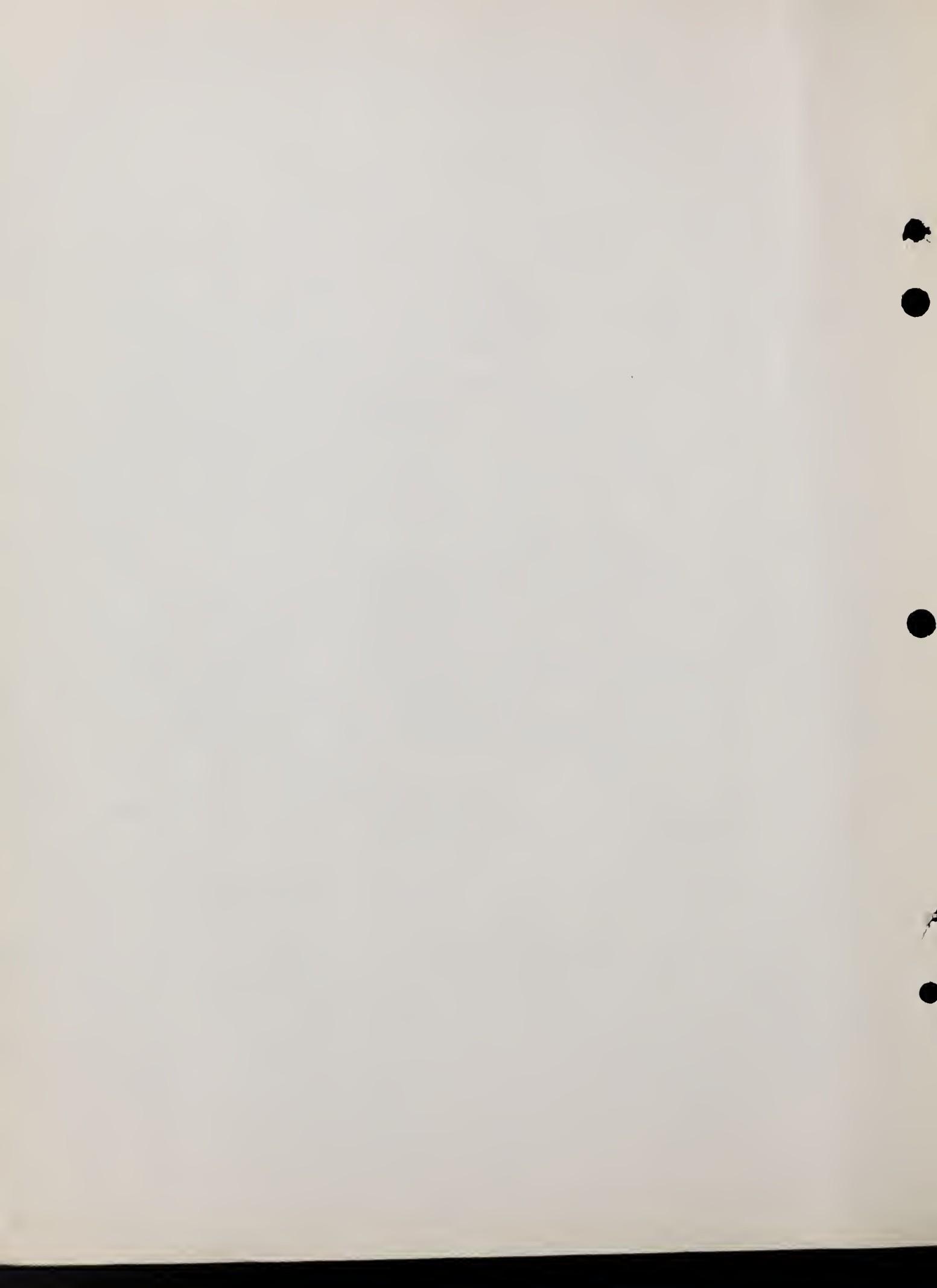


The first Teachers' Institute ever held in town was held on Friday, October 18, 1885 with teachers and School Committees present from Sharon, Norwood, Walpole, Foxboro and Mansfield. The Secretary of the State Board conducted the program and a free collation was provided by the people of the town. Provision was made that year for the supplying of free textbooks to the high school scholars and an English course was added to the high school curriculum.

1886 the school year became a calendar year for the first time. After several years without a Superintendent, Sharon cooperated with the town of Walpole in employing Mr. G. H. Danforth, a Dartmouth graduate at the rate of \$300 a year for two days' service a week. Mr. Danforth made a definite impression upon education.

He recommended that the heating system at the Centre School be changed from wood to coal. He complained about the four ungraded district schools with their irregular attendance and lack of uniformity of material. The Grammar School was not properly preparing scholars for High School. He states that children should be promoted only when they were "reasonably proficient" in the work of the lower grades and he found Sharon reading, writing and arithmetic unsatisfactory. He reminded the town that "it is mistaken kindness to advance pupils faster than their powers develop." He even suggested that no class be sent to the High School the following September.

Although teachers were cheerfully attending faculty meetings in the evening or on Saturday morning, he urged that he be permitted to dismiss school early on two Friday afternoons each term for the purpose of "presenting plans of work and methods to all teachers at the same time."

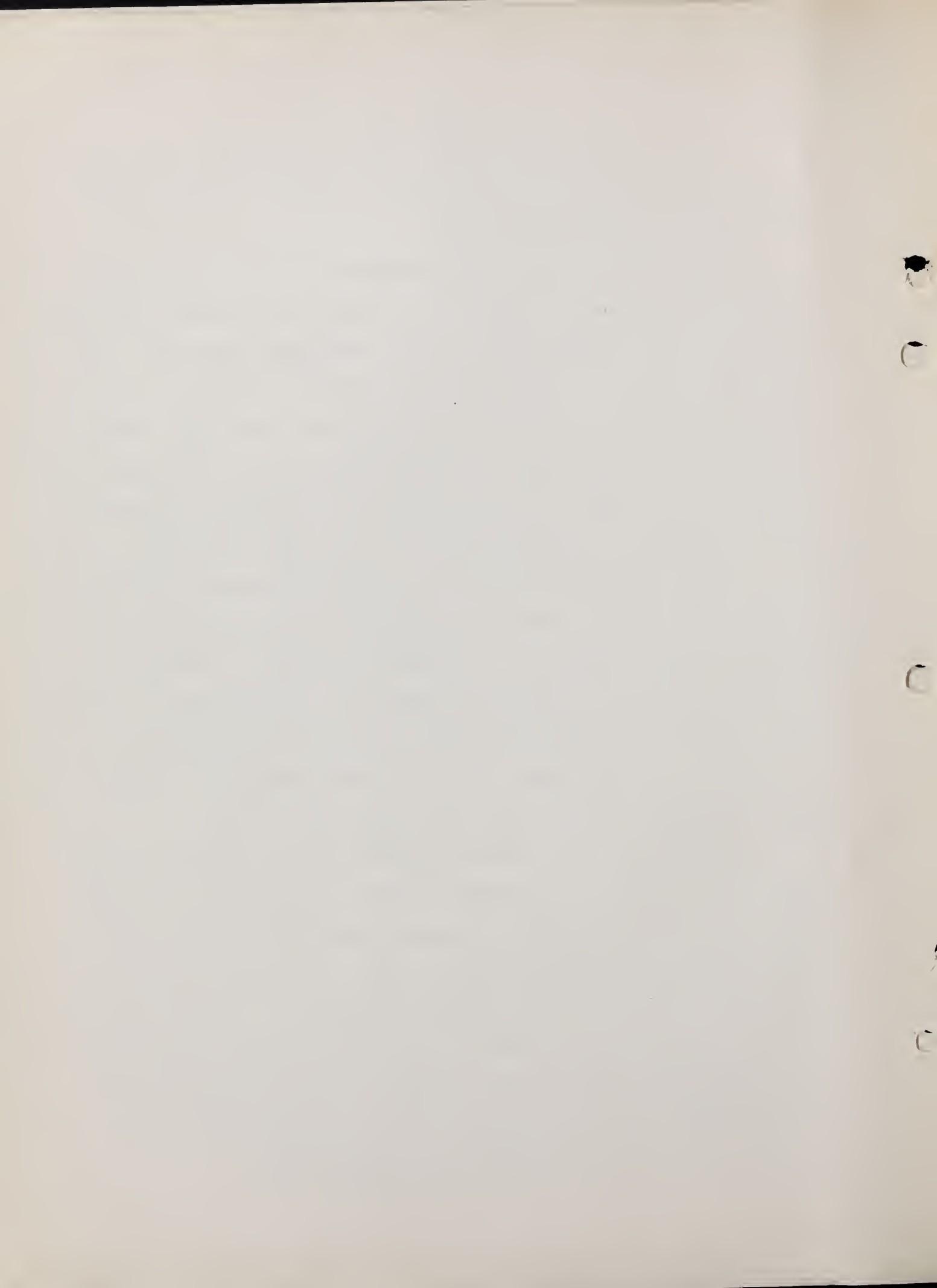


Today, we have increased our numbers, removed the old difficulty which, with discouraging taste, shall we say? or, meanwhile more are satisfied, in the trust economy.⁹

We are happy to report that the following year the superintendent found a great improvement. There were new books and supplementary materials, courses had been outlined, regular teachers' meetings had been held. The work of preparation for the High School was distinctly better than the year before. The number of tardinesses had been cut from 1518 to 1258, although in the High School the number had increased from 447 to 701. Two pupils had been graduated in 1881 and two more in 1884 but the Class of 1887 graduated five, of whom Mrs. H. Alberta Felt Farris is still living in Sharon.

More responsibility was given to the School Committee in 1889 when for the first time, the Committee was required to audit and approve all its own bills before submission to the Treasurer for payment. "Embarrassed by adverse criticisms in the presence of pupils," the Committee found it necessary to write in the annual report, "The office of the teacher (is not)... simply (to preserve) strict order in the school-room and (to induce) pupils to commit to memory certain facts found in the textbooks."

Perhaps this was the reason why five of the seven teachers resigned at the end of the term. The Committee preferred to believe that the school year was too short and accordingly changed it from 36 to 40 weeks, at the same time drawing up a complete course of study. Unfortunately, the course consisted of little more than the pages to be mastered in textbooks and tells us almost nothing of content. Could the fact that the highest salary in the system was that paid to the Teaching Principal of the High School - \$89.47 a month - have had anything to do with the turnover? The highest monthly salary paid in an ungraded school was \$36 a month.



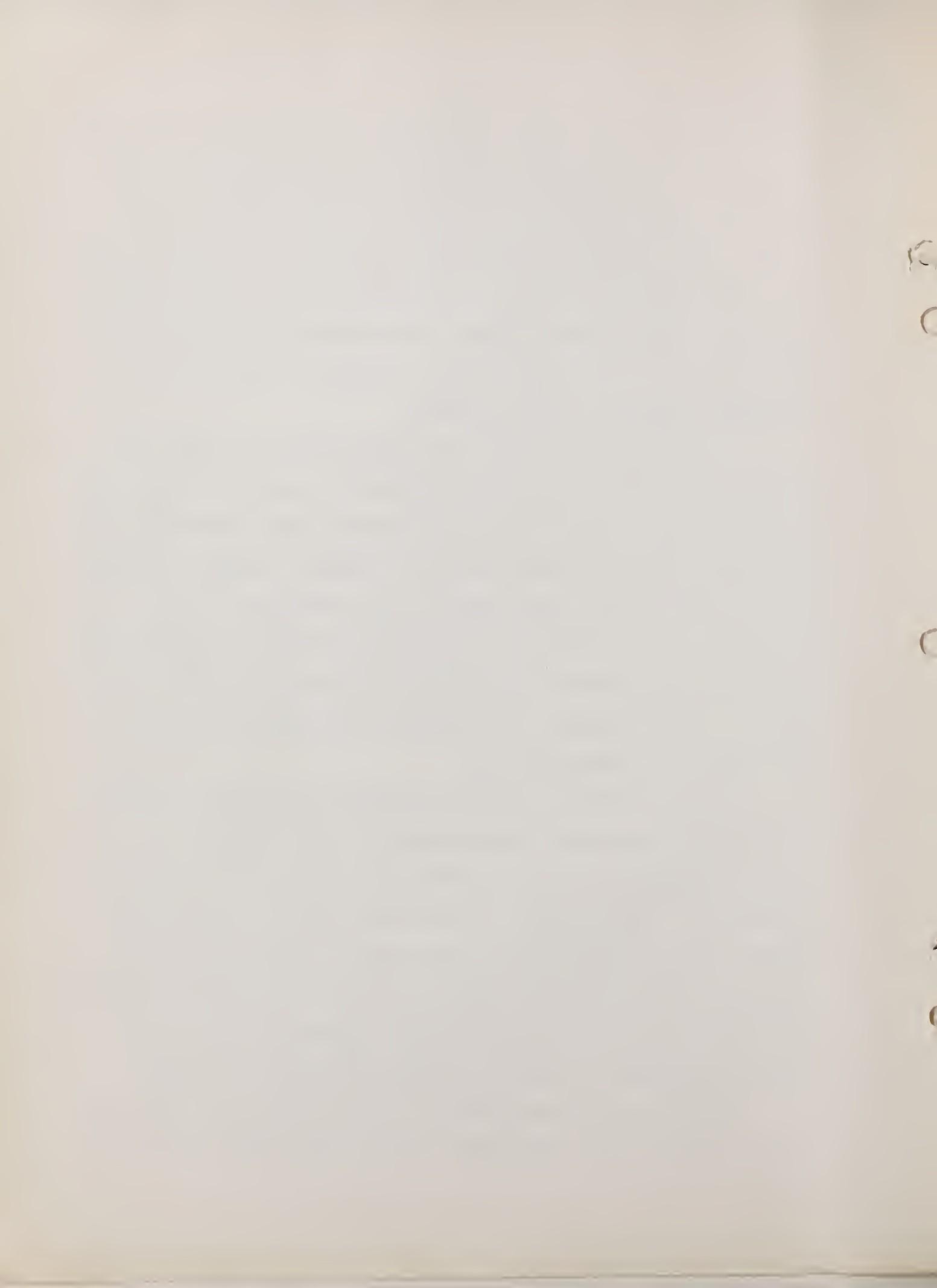
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The town beingadamst in its inability to permit the use of the large Town Hall for school purposes, the Committee was authorized to have until July 1, 1891 any suitable room or building for a school, with an allowance of \$200. After refusing a second request for the use of the Hall, the town did appoint a Committee of Five to examine the needs for a new high school building and bring in plans, estimates, recommendations, etc. at the annual meeting in 1891. It was voted informally to keep the school at the Stoughtonham Institute for the time being.

In spite of the fact that in the Primary School one teacher was struggling with over fifty pupils representing four grades in one room and that at the East School the teacher had forty-five pupils representing five grades, the schools were reported in 1891 as being in "excellent condition" with all teachers doing satisfactory work. The town adopted the Act, Chapter 431, Acts of 1888 and Sharon united with Stoughton and Mansfield in employing a Superintendent, Sharon's share of his salary to be \$175. Mr. Edwards P. Fitts of Middleboro was selected and filled his office most satisfactorily for twenty-one years.

The town furthermore accepted the report recommending enlargement of the Centre School rather than construction of a new school, and appropriated \$5115 for the purpose; \$1000 to be raised each year until the cost was met. When the Committee reported later that the cost would be greater, they were authorized to go ahead anyway. During the period of construction, the Grammar and Primary Schools met at the "Institute Building" and the High School in the vestry of the Congregational Church, the unexpected expenditure for rent sadly upsetting the Committee's budget.

But it was well worth the worry. The next report reads, "The rooms (of the renovated Centre Schoolhouse) are well heated, well ventilated and



well conducted; and the children are well cared for. The conditions are such that a teacher can be expected to do better work, and the scholars can study harder than was possible under the inferior conditions previously prevailing. To each man there is a separate day for each scholar; an arrangement that is far better as regards school discipline, as well as from a sanitary standpoint."

The Committee, fired with enthusiasm after the Reading Institute in Hyde Park, rejoiced that none of the teachers had resigned that year:

"Few realize what an advantage it is to have a good teacher retain her position year after year. She knows the failures and successes of her pupils; she knows what they have been taught and just what steps to take next; she has the sympathy (sic of the neighborhood in which she teaches, and she has confidence placed in her; she knows what plans have been proposed by those having the school in charge, and is working out those plans with a clear understanding of what is required to be done. Such a teacher deserves the heartiest encouragement. All interested in the schools know that to secure good results, a teacher must spend many hours in preparation for each day's duties; must be constantly on the lookout for new events, in order to keep up with the times; must keep her physical being in proper condition to control and direct the many restless children placed under her care."

Still more Truancy By-laws were passed in 1893. These were even more desperate than the previous attempts to control attendance. Any child absent three times without excuse on three different days or late six times in a month was to be called an habitual truant and might be committed to the Truant School at Walpole. The laws apparently had little effect because Mr. Fitts continued patiently every year to add the minutes and hours lost in each school because of tardiness and dismissals. The total in 1893 was 126 hours, 22 minutes for the fall term alone. But perhaps a loss of time in 1895 for the entire year of 271 hours, 27 minutes is some improvement!

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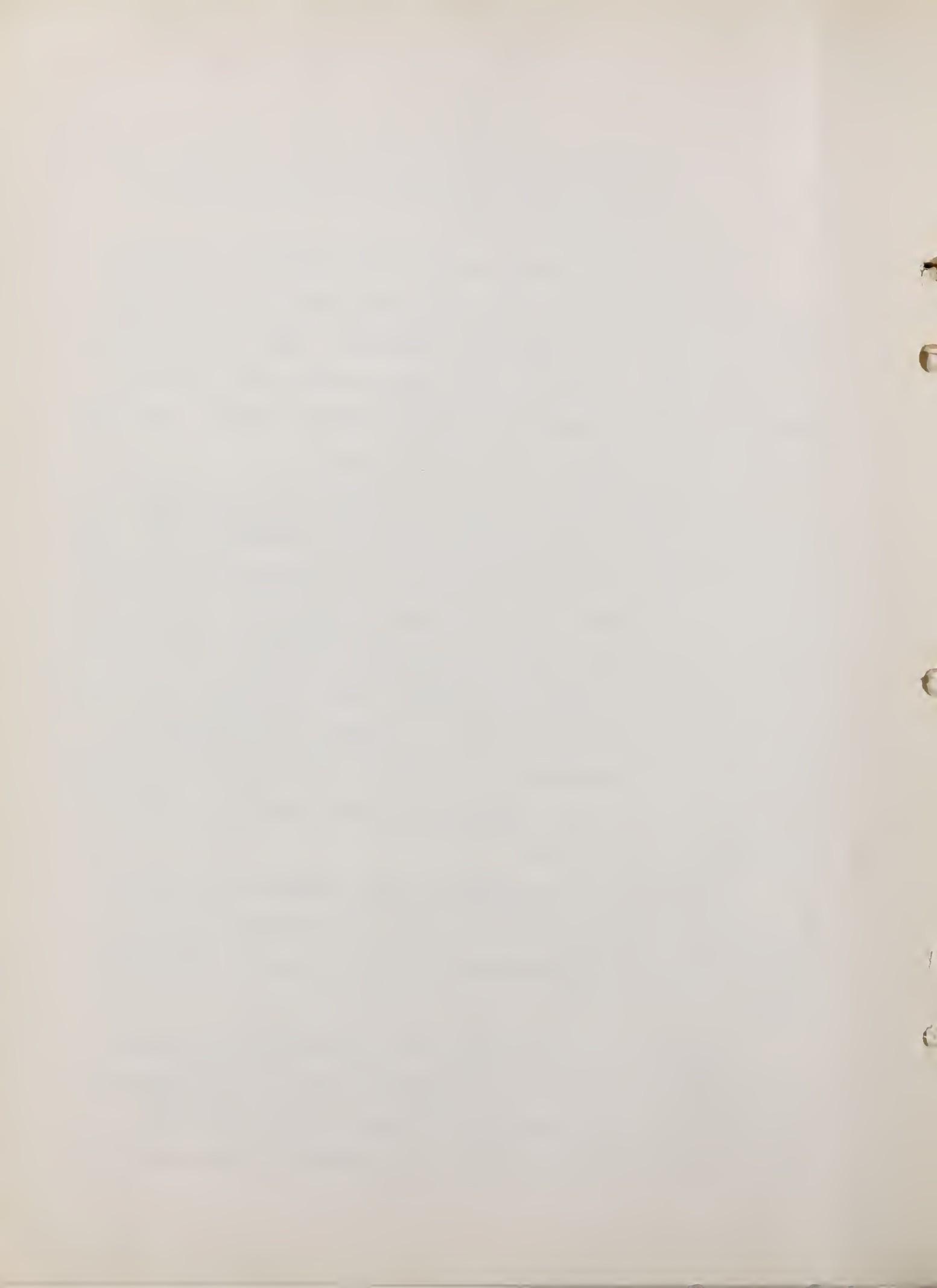
The appropriations for 1896 were voted - \$100 for the Superintendent, \$400 for books and supplies, \$60 for repairs and incidentals, \$4500 for building, salaries and fuel.

Town interest was revived in 1897 when the Committee urged that an Intermediate School be added in the center, saying that it was absolutely necessary to have two more classrooms in September. Music and drawing were a full part of the curriculum, a fourth class had been added to the High School, and they were recommending a change to vertical writing. There were over 400 children in town and something must be done.

The legislative process began with a Special Town Meeting early in 1898 at which, after a two hour debate, the matter of securing two more rooms was referred back to the School Committee with instructions to investigate a site for a new building. At a second meeting, it was voted to accept the Murray lot on High Street, the cost not to exceed \$2000 and to erect thereon a four room house at a total cost of \$9000. In July, \$1200 was added to the appropriation for grading and furniture. One member of the Committee resigned because of dissatisfaction over the plans and a new building committee was elected from the floor. Permission was given to use the Lower Town Hall temporarily for a school room.

In August, the Town rescinded the vote of \$9000 but did agree to put a sanitary plant into the Centre School. Then followed more votes - \$220 for Building Committee expenses and the architect's fee and \$8000 for a school.

In November, the Town voted to have a new committee to bring in a plan the following March with an appropriation of \$7500, not to include the furnishings. The plans submitted in 1899 were approved and the final amount was \$8100 for building, grading and furnishings. Sharon workers only



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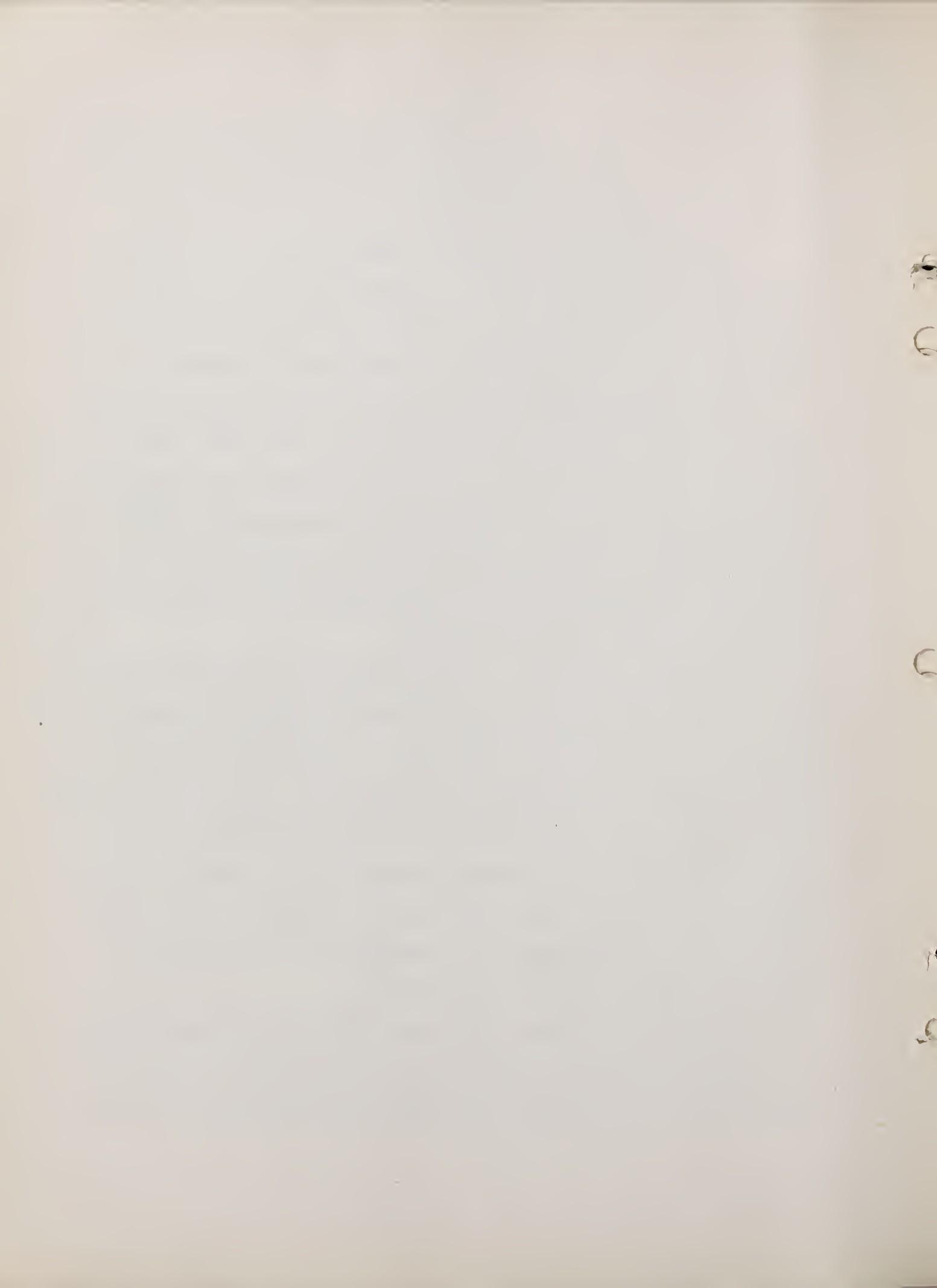
were to be employed and by the day. Feeling however, was so strong, that it was decided to make the salaries of the District Teachers the same as those of the schools in the Centre, except for the High School.

Dissolution was called and another special meeting. There were no Sharon workers available by the day or otherwise and part of the March motion was therefore rescinded. In irritation, some voters attempted to also rescind the article on salaries but fortunately were defeated.

When the High Street School was occupied in 1899, housing problems seemed at an end. The rooms, although "not large", could easily take 40 pupils and there was even room for a Kindergarten started by private enterprise. (The town took over the kindergarten the following year but when the voters refused to make an appropriation for the purpose in 1902, the kindergarten disappeared from existence until 1947.) All salaries were raised \$2 a week in a burst of generosity.

Progress was in the air. A Dartmouth graduate, Mr. James N. Pringle, later Commissioner of Education for New Hampshire, accepted the position of Principal of the High School at \$900 a year. A bicycle room fitted with racks, was opened in the basement of the High School. Two courses were being offered in the High School and Latin was no longer required (this in spite of the new book!). Physical Geography was added to the curriculum. They suggested adding an extra year to the High School because the pupils were so low on the June examinations. The children were too young, anyway. Sharon was getting ready for the new century.

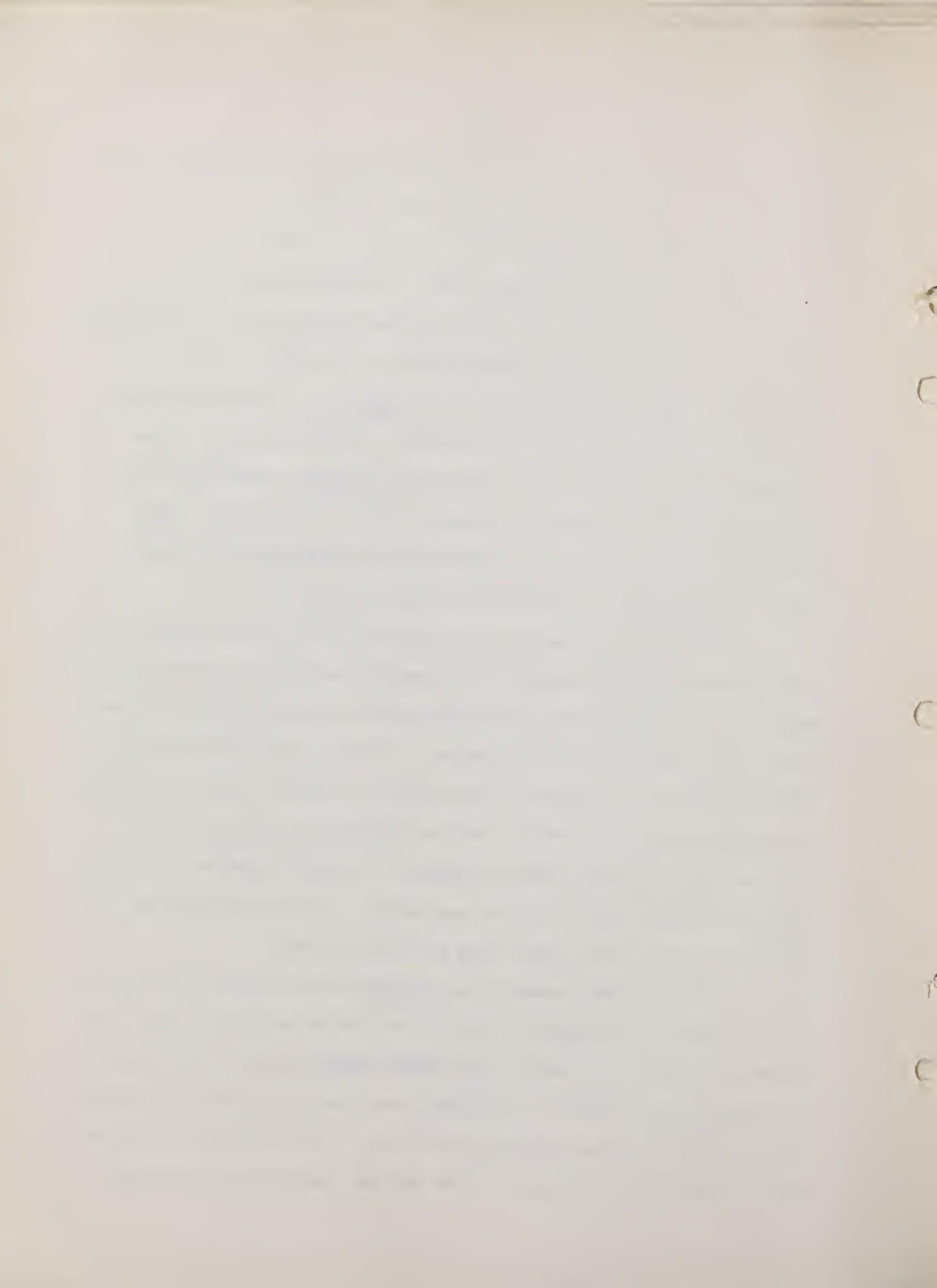
And progress continued. There was another general salary increase. Mr. Pringle was allowed \$50 a year for an office assistant. The Superintendent was still receiving \$180. Physics and Chemistry were added to the High



School curriculum. Transportation was being supplied to three pupils from West Sharon to the Center. Mr. Carpenter had given the new school two beautiful photographs of Plymouth Rock. The Boston University Glee Club gave a benefit concert for the High School. Everyone was interested in the discussions as to whether there should be nine grades before the High School. The school budget had risen to \$7350 but the tax rate was only \$13. On March 23, an advertisement appeared in the Advocate: "Lady school teacher, slightly out of health, would like board at a reasonable price in some pleasant private family." The editor of the Advocate, commenting on the extreme number of new teachers in Norwood, made this sly remark: "How different the case with us, where wedded bliss evidently has no charms equal to the pleasure of teaching in the Sharon schools!"

The annual maintenance of the High School was \$1200, plus coal and miscellaneous, but it was obviously cheaper than sending the children elsewhere. The High School was experimenting with a single session - 8:30 to 1:30, with a twenty-minute intermission - and finding with relief that the unbroken day was not injurious to the scholars' health. Only a disgruntled parent who thought the teachers used the blackboards too much, and the children on the trolley line were unhappy. The latter lamented that they arrived in school either 3/4 of an hour early or five minutes late and had to wait from two o'clock until three for the trip home.

By 1902, eleven teachers were employed in the town and 351 children were in school. The population was 2060 and the tax rate was \$14.80. But Sharon was 277th in the state in the amount appropriated for the support of the public schools (22nd in the country) and 270th in attendance. The taxation cost for educating each child was \$26.49. All the High School teachers (both of them!) were college graduates but the town mourned the passing of



of the kindergarten.

The report of 1903 has a familiar sound. "Sharon has a large shifting population so that we are constantly losing some of our best pupils. The registers show new pupils entering nearly every week and this has made the teaching very difficult."

Dissatisfied with the lack of a well at the South School, the shabby condition of the North School, and the closing of the West School for six days when no substitute could be secured for a sick teacher, the parents of the Districts renewed their demand for a central school with transportation provided. The time was not ripe.

Teachers were again concerned with salaries. Female salaries were good as compared with the state average but living costs in Sharon were very high. The High Street Principal received \$536.25, the highest rate on the elementary level; and Mr. Pringle had been raised from \$1070 in 1902, to \$1072.50. The High School janitor received \$500. The School Committee, however, had no difficulty in filling vacancies. They were gratified to find teachers buying books and magazines to improve themselves at their own expense!

By 1906, Seniors in High School were no longer being sent to other towns to complete their education because there were now four full years (actually five - Grades 9-13). There were only three teachers but Commercial subjects had been added. Sharon could proudly boast that its graduates could enter any college or technical school, and did so.

Attendance was better. The Truant Officer had, in desperation, taken three boys from the High Street School to court where they had been placed on probation. The effect on the rest of the school population was salutary.

That year, in accordance with state law, hearing and vision were

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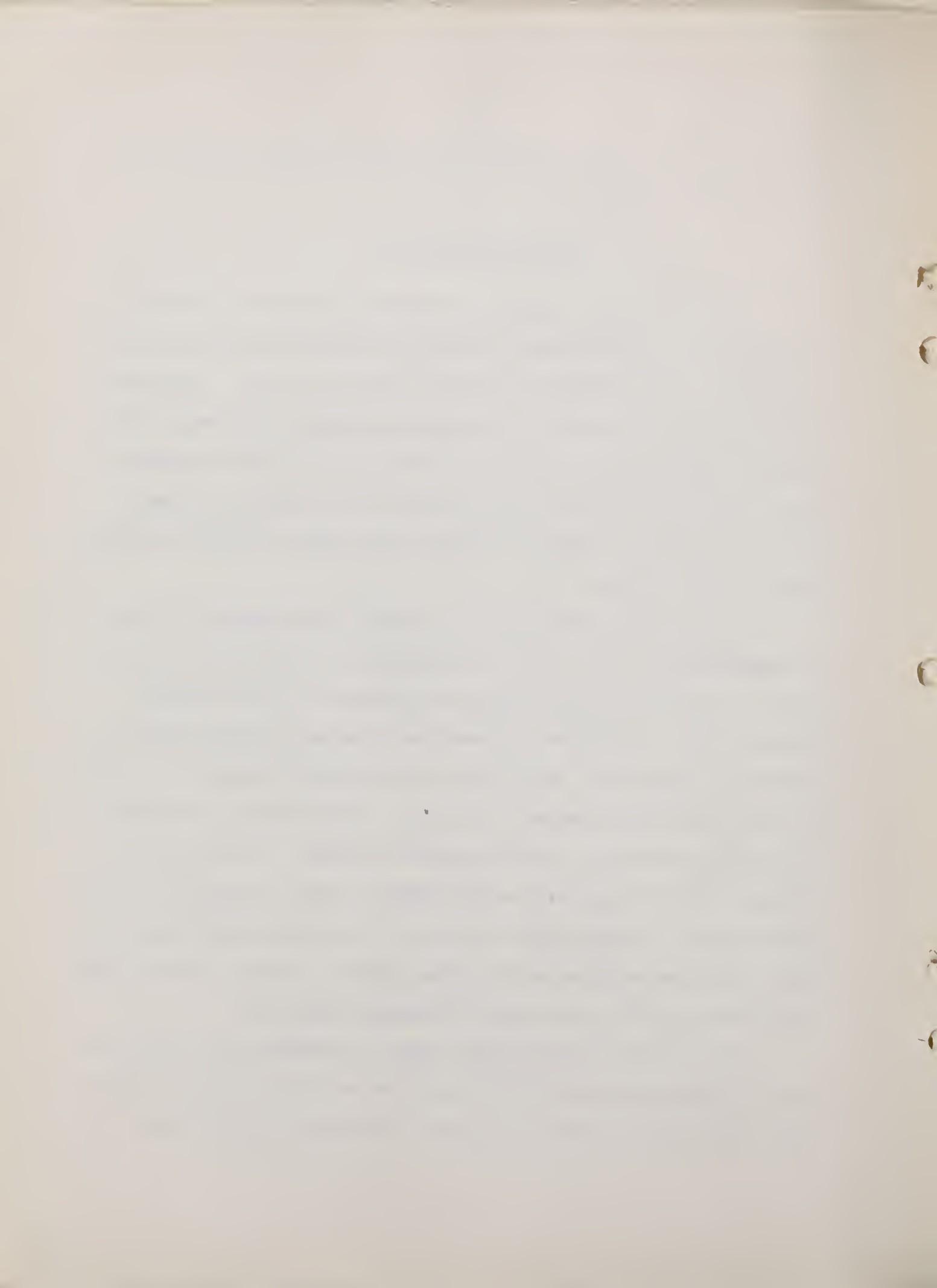
tested for the first time. Of 315 pupils, 62 had defective vision and 20 had defective hearing.

SCHOOL CENTRALIZATION

In 1907 the School Committee re-examined the District situation. The North School had five pupils, the East had twelve (of whom five were state wards or non-residents), and the West School had seven. Recognizing the fact that it is "impossible to secure any position of importance with promotion unless one has at least passed through High School" and anticipating, therefore, a greater school population, the Committee recommended that four more rooms be added to the High Street School. Thus, the District Schools could be closed.

At the following Town Meeting, a committee was appointed to bring in recommendations on five sites for the purpose of constructing a new high school. It was specifically voted not to purchase the land offered on Station Street. In November, the committee report was met with a motion for indefinite postponement. By this time, all the District Schools were closed and their pupils were absorbed in the center. There were two grades with one teacher in each room - the membership as follows: 47, 45, 44, 48, 65. The High School was especially crowded with 61 pupils at the end of the year with only four to graduate and 37 to enter. The situation seemed happy only in the lowest grades where the new Aldine method of reading, in which rhymes with unfamiliar words were learned, was proving interesting.

In March, 1909, after several attempts at amendment and reconsideration, the town appropriated \$20,600 with which to build and equip a new High School with \$3400 allocated for the site. The School Committee wrote of the



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meeting: "Personal influence tried to overpower the other judgment of the citizens."

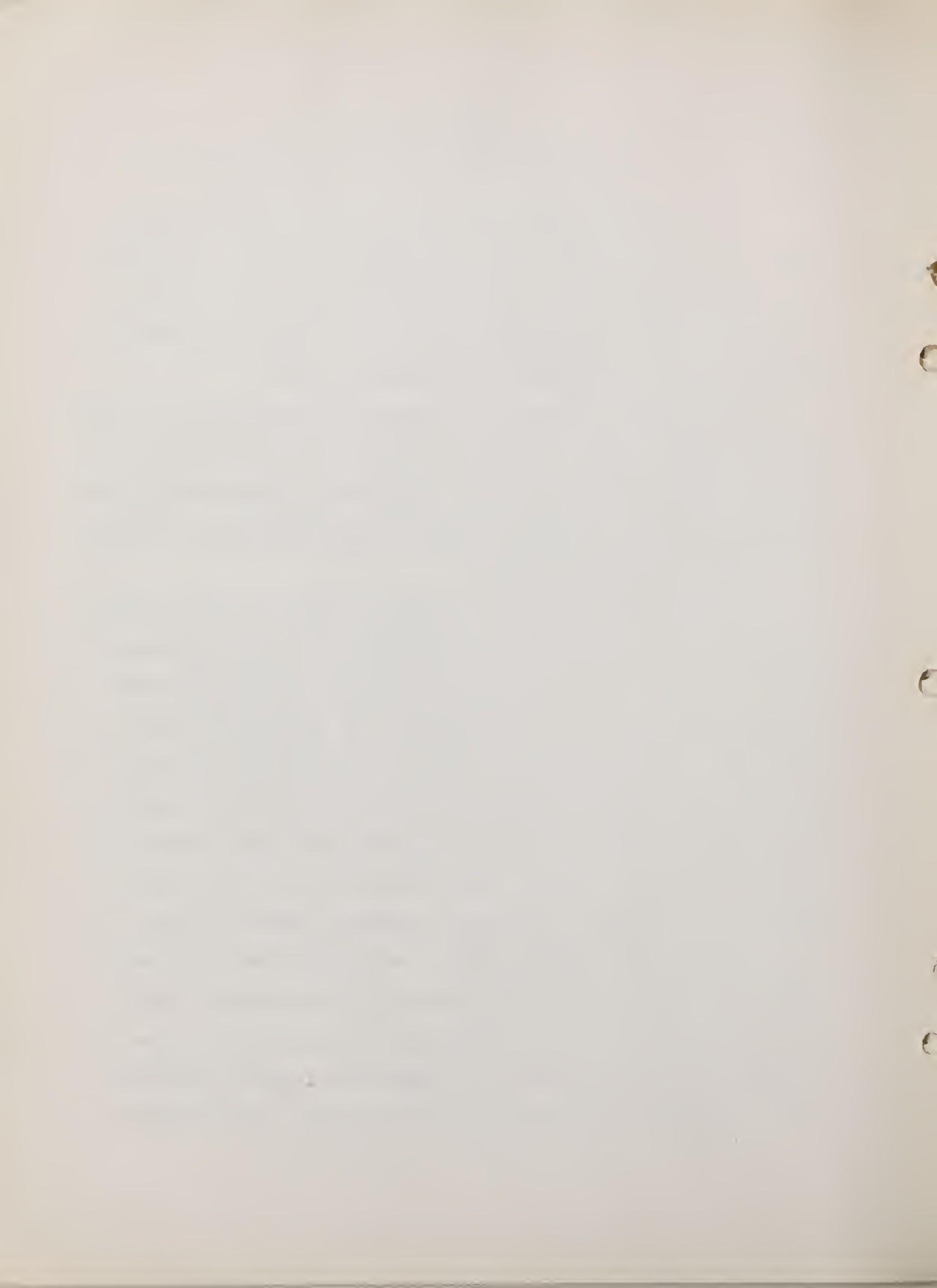
Then, in June, the Committee asked once more for the use of the lower floor of the Town Hall, the town appointed a committee to see whether the congestion really existed. Their recommendation in August for an appropriation of \$750 for plumbing, heating, etc., to improve conditions in the Centre School resulting from the congestion, was made.

At a meeting in September, an unsuccessful attempt was made to change the site. Another motion to increase the appropriation to \$23,600 was also defeated. The final motion to cut the appropriation to \$20,000 and to erect a wooden building was defeated because the necessary two-thirds was lacking.

More meetings were to come!

An attempt was made early in November to add four rooms and a playground at a cost of \$16,000, to the High Street School. This was defeated. Later that month, a vote on a brick school was declared illegal when 140 present cast 142 votes. At a third meeting, there was still not a two-thirds vote. Success came only in March, 1910 when the site originally proposed, at the corner of Pleasant and Station Streets was purchased for \$3000 and an appropriation of \$20,000 was made for the school. When it was reported at the April Town Meeting that the cost of the Horrell lot was actually less than \$3000, the remainder was amicably voted for grading.

The delighted Committee found the new building "commodious, well-heated, well-lighted.....a magnificent proof of the confidence of the citizens in the schools.....of fine proportions.....a tribute to the architect." For the first time, each teacher had a separate recitation room. The sanitary and health facilities were superb. The laboratories



on the top floor were ample and well-equipped. Sharon High School was certified by the College Entrance Examination Board of New England and secondary education had been permanently provided for.

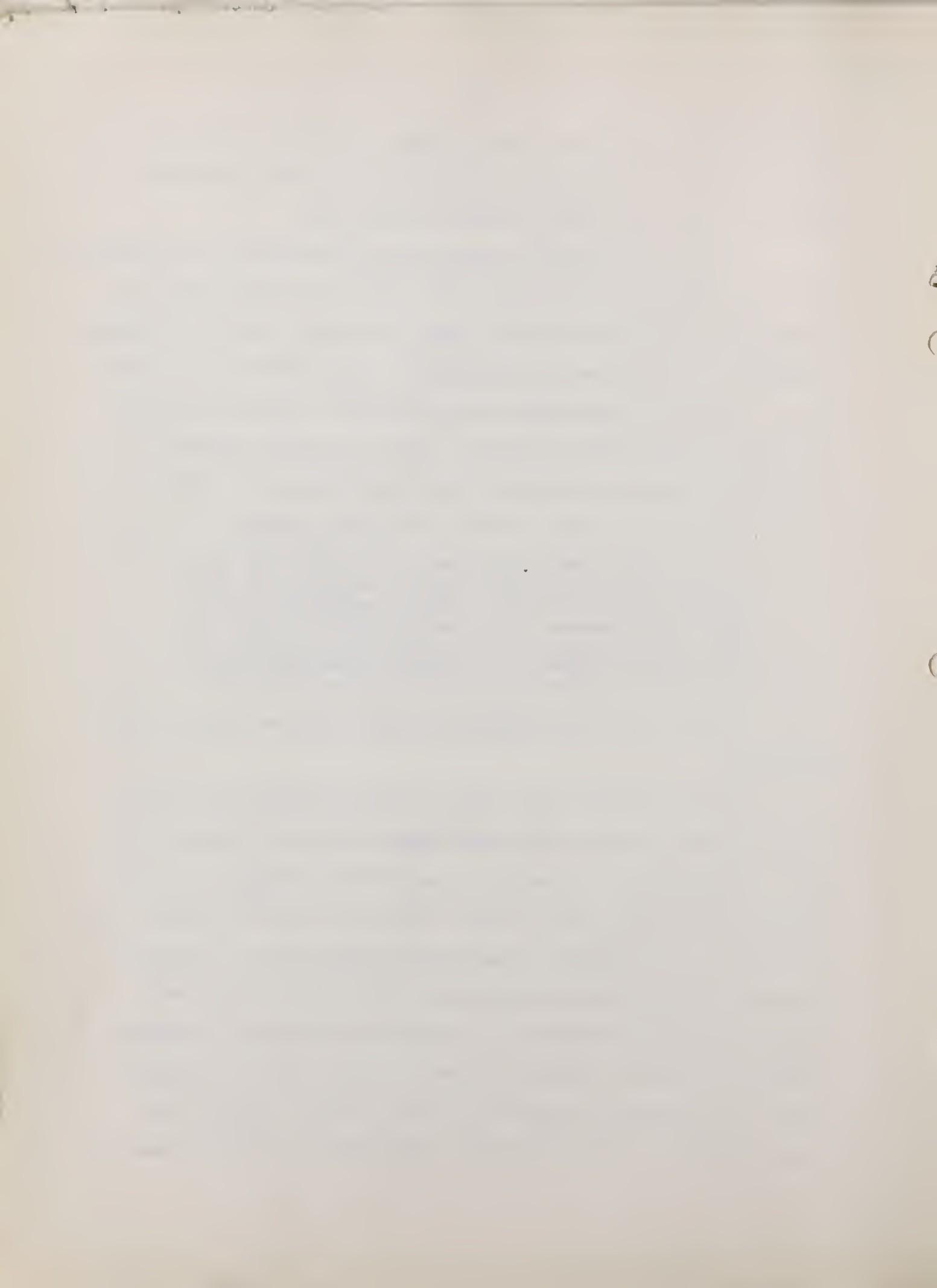
A bad fire so extensively damaged the High Street School on February 9, 1910 that it was closed for six weeks while repairs and renovations, including steel ceilings and electric lights, were made. Most of the students temporarily had classes in the Congregational Church but 24 met in the Town Hall. In April, the North School was destroyed by a forest fire and the Committee collected \$800 in insurance. There was a severe diphtheria epidemic that same year, resulting in the loss of more days of school.

"Uncle William" wrote a letter to the Sharon Advocate:

"So long as the teacher permits the scholars to litter the High School grounds with luncheon leavings which the janitor overlooks, I suggest that the town install a billy goat on the premises. He can be tethered to a movable stake and relied upon to clean up the yard. He might also, without extra expense, give the school committee a little jog, should any member chance to be crossing that way."

The Code of Rules and Regulations adopted that year appears in the Supplement.

Among the members of the Class of 1911, the first alumni of the "new" high school was Mrs. Elsie Bishop Hight. Among other notes of the year we find the Committee providing transportation by barge for all who lived more than a mile from the center. The Dental Clinic was started. It was urged that some kind of a parent-teacher organization be established. The school participated in an Agricultural Fair in the Town Hall where students' exhibits gained plaudits. The Eighth Grade was busily engaged in basketry and courses in domestic science and manual arts were being suggested. Six teachers had launched on a novel venture. Unable to find living quarters in private homes, they rented a house of Summit Avenue and

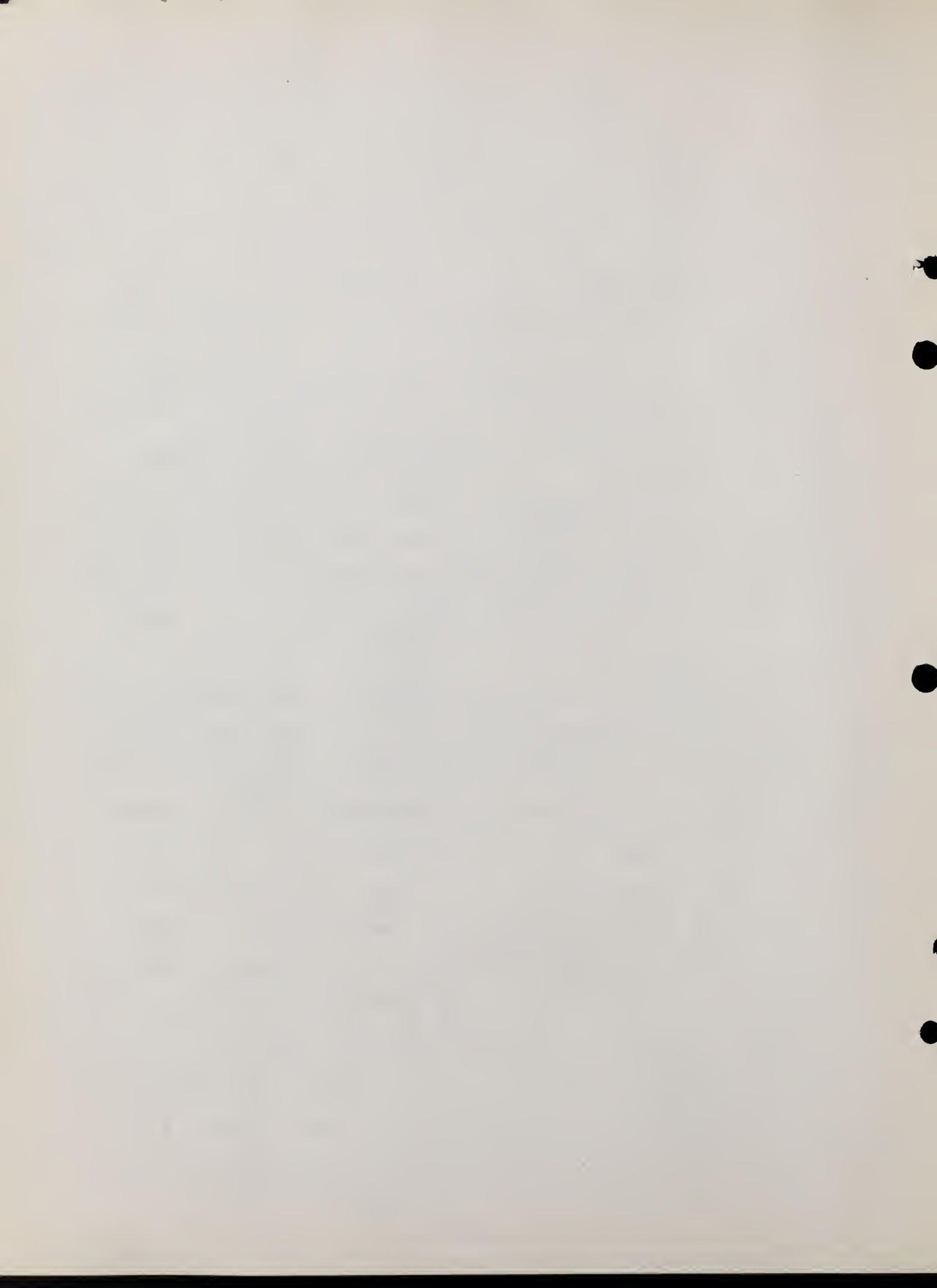


divided the housework among them, the teachers assuming duty over other Friday for two weeks. As proof of their genuine culture and refinement, they even had a piano and subscribed to two newspapers. There was only one flaw in the situation. When one teacher developed measles in the spring, the schools had to be closed during the period of quarantine of her five housemates.

So successful was the experiment that the following year, ten teachers engaged a housekeeper and the house on Billings Street now occupied by the Bowmans. The teachers certainly needed a relaxing home environment. High School teachers had $7\frac{1}{2}$, 8, and 9 classes respectively a day and were requesting the aid of a colleague. In the grammar school, the ventilation was completely inadequate, the sanitary facilities almost non-existent, the floors were springy. In fact, the town had to vote \$2800 for immediate repairs.

Grade VIII had added a course in Agriculture and clubs were flourishing - the Junior Home and School Garden Club, the Junior Corn Growers, the Potato Culture Club, and the Junior Potato Growers. Citizens were demanding Spanish for the High School and foreign languages for the elementary grades. A Penmanship course was added to the curriculum. The Grammar School had a bazaar to pay for its graduation expenses while the Seniors pondered the merits of mottoes such as "Esse quam Videri"; Today Decided Tomorrow; "Ad Astra per Aspera; and wondered whether to select the yellow roses or the blue pansy for class flower. Penny Savings were flourishing and Sharon students were winning prize-speaking contests with other towns.

1913 had several distinctions. The Teachers' Retirement Fund came into existence. Spanish was taught in the High School. The use of plan books was required. Under Chapter 367, Acts of 1911, the School Committee

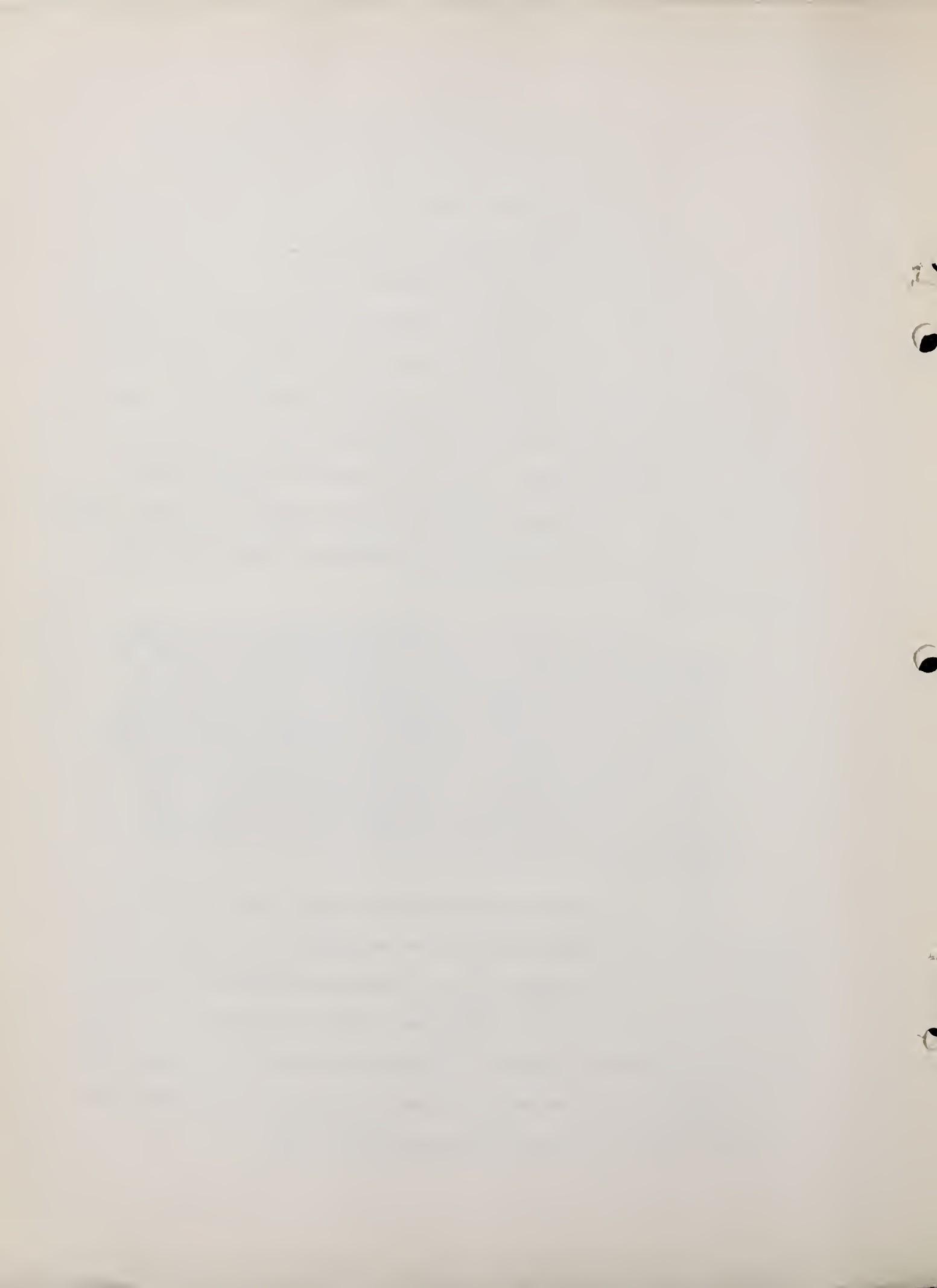


permitted the school building to be used for public purposes. Books tried to be closer to the Committee and were rejected. Books were deposited at the schools from the Public Library. Grade I was put upon two occasions but the large children enjoyed the privilege of a full day. The flag on the Primary School one day was hoisted with the stars down, leading to facetious comment. A deer appeared behind the High School in October. 710 children were in school, 36 fewer than the year before. The Senior Physics class installed a wireless on the roof of the High School. The South Sharon School visited Boston and was properly impressed by the Art Museum and the Public Gardens. The cost of education per child in the state was \$38.90 - in Norwood, \$33.37; in Walpole, \$35.37; in Sharon, \$45.00.

Mr. Fitts, in his twentieth year of service, wrote in his annual report for 1915:

"It rests, therefore, in double measure upon the schools to mould the plastic materials in its hands; to inculcate from the outset by precept and by example, by indirect teaching and by direct instruction, sound moral principles; to make the child self-governing; to insist on obedience to just requirements in the home, the school, the community; to demand unswerving honesty in all things; to cultivate a spirit of honor; to impress the need of purity in thought, word, and deed; to place integrity above self-aggrandizement; to implant an enthusiastic loyalty to city, to state, and to the flag; to teach that truth and probity far outweigh wealth and power; and to ground deep in every heart that unselfish service for others is the highest form of living."

That year the School Committee sold the East, West, and North properties and some of the money was used to purchase an amazing new gas machine for the Science Department. Mr. Fitts was serving only one day a week at \$360 a year but the following year, at his recommendation, a full-time Superintendent was employed. The South School had been closed. Miss Packard was conducting one section of the First Grade in the Town Hall and the First Grade as a whole was doing exceptional work.



The spelling, reading, language, arithmetic, and geography curriculum were planned. Even by business, the School Committee was held to two sessions a month.

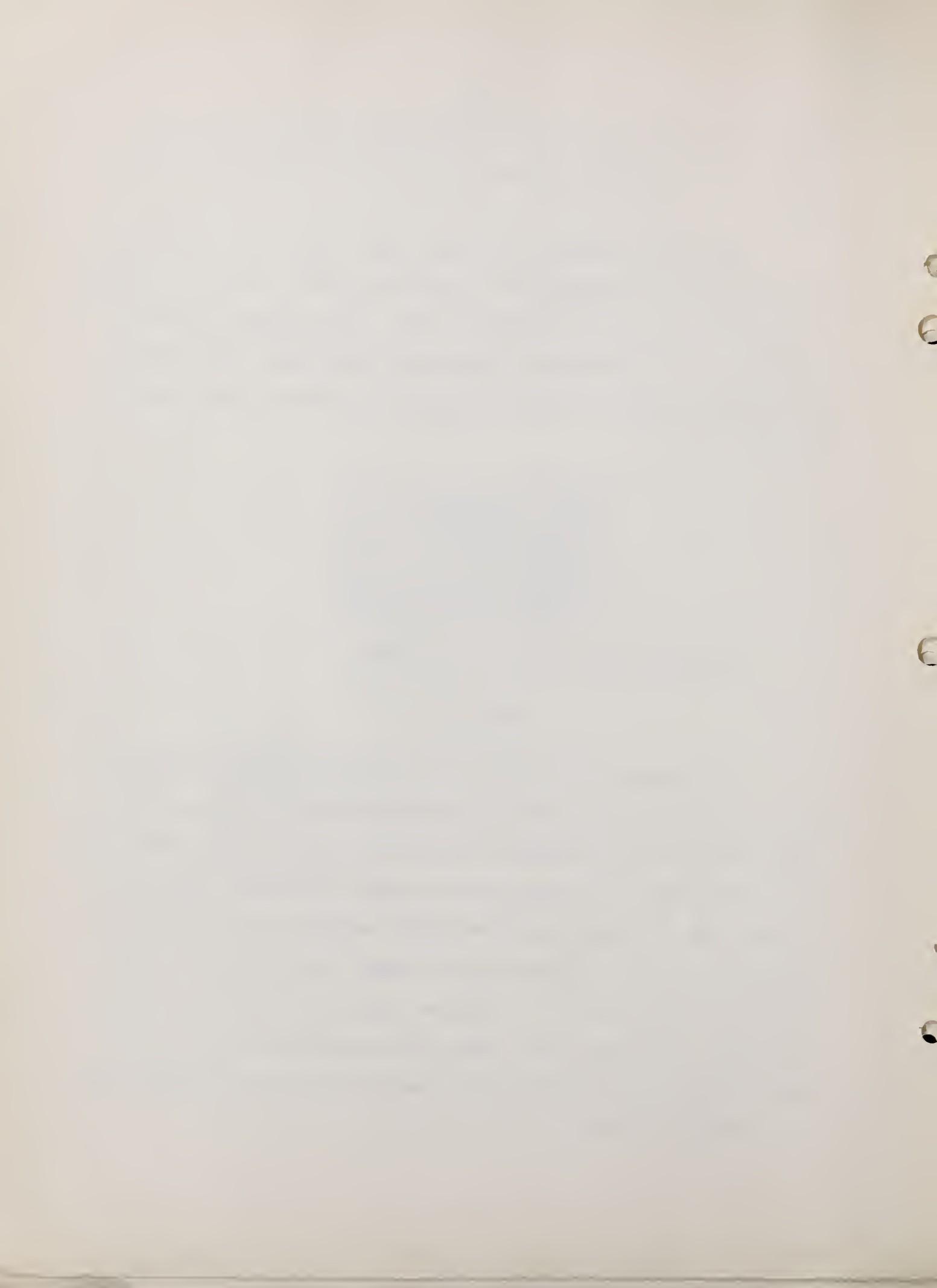
One of their problems was teachers' pay. Faced by the impossibility of finding suitable boarding-places in town, the teachers demanded increased salaries to meet extremely high living costs. Sharon had been grouped by the state in the classification of towns under 5000 having a High School, with Wrentham, Groveland, Weston and Groton. Its relative position was as follows:

Valuation.....	3
Number of teachers.....	4
Number of pupils.....	2
Principals' pay.....	1
Supervisors' pay.....	5
Teachers' pay.....	4
Allowance for textbooks..	5
Average position.....	3

The cost per pupil that year was \$35.69.

WORLD WAR I

Participation of our country in a great war brought many changes to Sharon. The cost of the schools had increased 98.5% in ten years, in part because the town was employing Mr. Vernon Ames as Superintendent and Principal of the High School. 457 children were in school, an increase in ten years of 25.6%. The pay roll had increased 55.6%; supplies, 87%; fuel, 64.3%. Transportation alone - divided among the barges, the first auto, and the trolley line - cost \$2986.20. German was being taught, only to be dropped immediately. The weather was so severe and the shortage of coal so acute that half-sessions were held during the entire winter and the February vacation lasted for two weeks.



A wide course including, history, geography and civics was introduced and course outlines were made for all the elementary subjects.

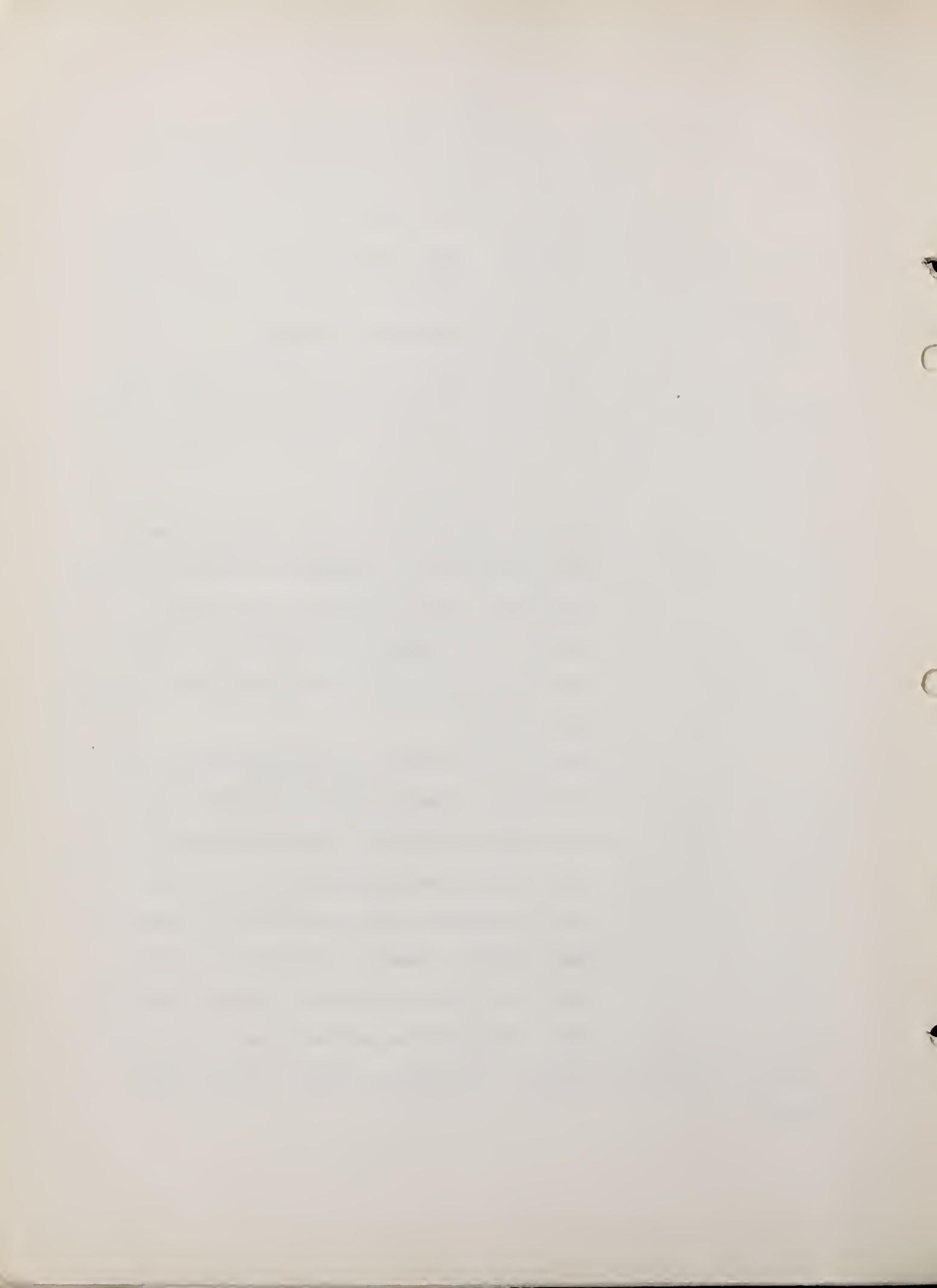
The administration of the first "standard tests" given in the town, the Cleveland Survey in Arithmetic, showed that only the Third Grade had an achievement comparable to that of Cleveland, all the others being disgracefully low. Further testing indicated weakness in spelling.

The Fortnightly Club established a school lunch in the High School, serving hot soup or coco with sandwiches to as many as seventy-five children a day. But when sandwiches were dropped and only about 25 children availed themselves of a hot dinner, the project was given up.

The Committee again was deeply concerned with a demand for space. The Grammar School was still ill-ventilated, ill-lighted, lacking in sanitary facilities, and now was overcrowded. Various schemes of enlargement or of temporary quarters were possible but it seemed best to build a new Junior-Senior High School on a lot of eight to ten acres, with ample space for playgrounds, athletic field, and gardens.

The latter phrase was an echo of the staunch participation of the school children in the war program. Victory Gardens and Pig Clubs were popular. Everyone joined the Junior Red Cross. 347 out of 432 children bought Thrift and War Savings Stamps at an average of \$10.64 per child.

For nearly the first five weeks in 1918 the schools were closed because of the dread Influenza epidemic. However, in spite of the serious loss of school time in both 1917 and 1918, when the the Cleveland tests were given twice again, tremendous improvement was manifested and in April the classes were well above standard. Spelling improvement, however, lagged behind.



Because the increasing cost of living, a "rise" of \$1 was given each teacher, making the lowest salary \$600. In the grade schools, the teaching load was only 35 children and 30 in the High School.

CHARLES E. WILPLA SCHOOL

At the Town Meeting in 1919, a Committee of nine, including three members of the School Committee, was selected to report on school building needs. Their recommendation to purchase 22 acres on Summit Avenue and High Street Extension was dismissed. No further action was taken until February 10, 1920 when it was voted to acquire the present site on South Main Street for \$2125 and a new plans Committee was selected. On June 22, it was reported that the land had been bought and plans calling for a preliminary expenditure of \$16,500 were accepted. However, action on erection was referred to a special Town Meeting to be called after January 1, 1921. A Special School-house Committee was instructed to look into the purchase of portable two-room schools.

There were 490 children in school and the congestion was so bad that 40 children in the First and Second Grades were meeting in the lower Town Hall and 32 others were having school over Pettee's Store. Previously, there had been double sessions for several weeks for Grades I and II. Some classes were meeting in the High School building; at inconvenience to the High School program. Sharon, having been named Class A by the State Board of Education, was anxious to keep its rating.

These problems were the responsibility of Mr. Nelson Howard of Mansfield, who had succeeded Mr. Ames. He gave only one day a week to Sharon for a salary of \$500 a year. His impression of Sharon was favorable. He found the pupils "strong physically and alert mentally....At first I



observed a lack of cooperation on the part of many of the High School pupils, also a tendency to delay in carrying out the directions of the teachers." Later he commented: "The teachers have succeeded in securing better scholarship, more prompt obedience, and a better school spirit." Mr. Howard presented the Committee of the necessity of raising teachers' salaries in order to continue receiving State Aid.

Meanwhile the battle for the school continued.

A special town meeting called for May 18, 1921 was cancelled. On June 6, \$3500 more was voted for the land. On August 18, the Committee asked for \$90,000 for the building. On September 15, the report was accepted once again and when a written ballot was taken, the town voted 163-37 to build the school at \$90,000. But they weren't quite through. On October 10, the name was officially changed from "Public School" to "Grammar School", a title it wore until February 14, 1922 when \$300 was appropriated for a bronze tablet suitably commemorating Charles R. Wilber, a hero of World War I. (It seems almost unfair to remind the reader that the Town of Walpole promptly sent the School Committee a bill for Charles K. Wilber's education in their schools!) Until the school was ready, the former auditorium of the Public Library was used for an overflow class, suitable sanitary facilities being installed at the expense of the School Department.

Once again all Sharon's school problems were settled. There was a large room in which the barge children could eat lunch; there was a room for the Nurse; there were even teachers' rooms. 290 children left the building in 70 seconds during fire drills. Latin and Algebra were introduced during the second term in Grade VIII. The new Beacon reading system, based upon the sounding of words, was better than all its predecessors. There was a Glee Club. Basketball and track were popular. The boys were



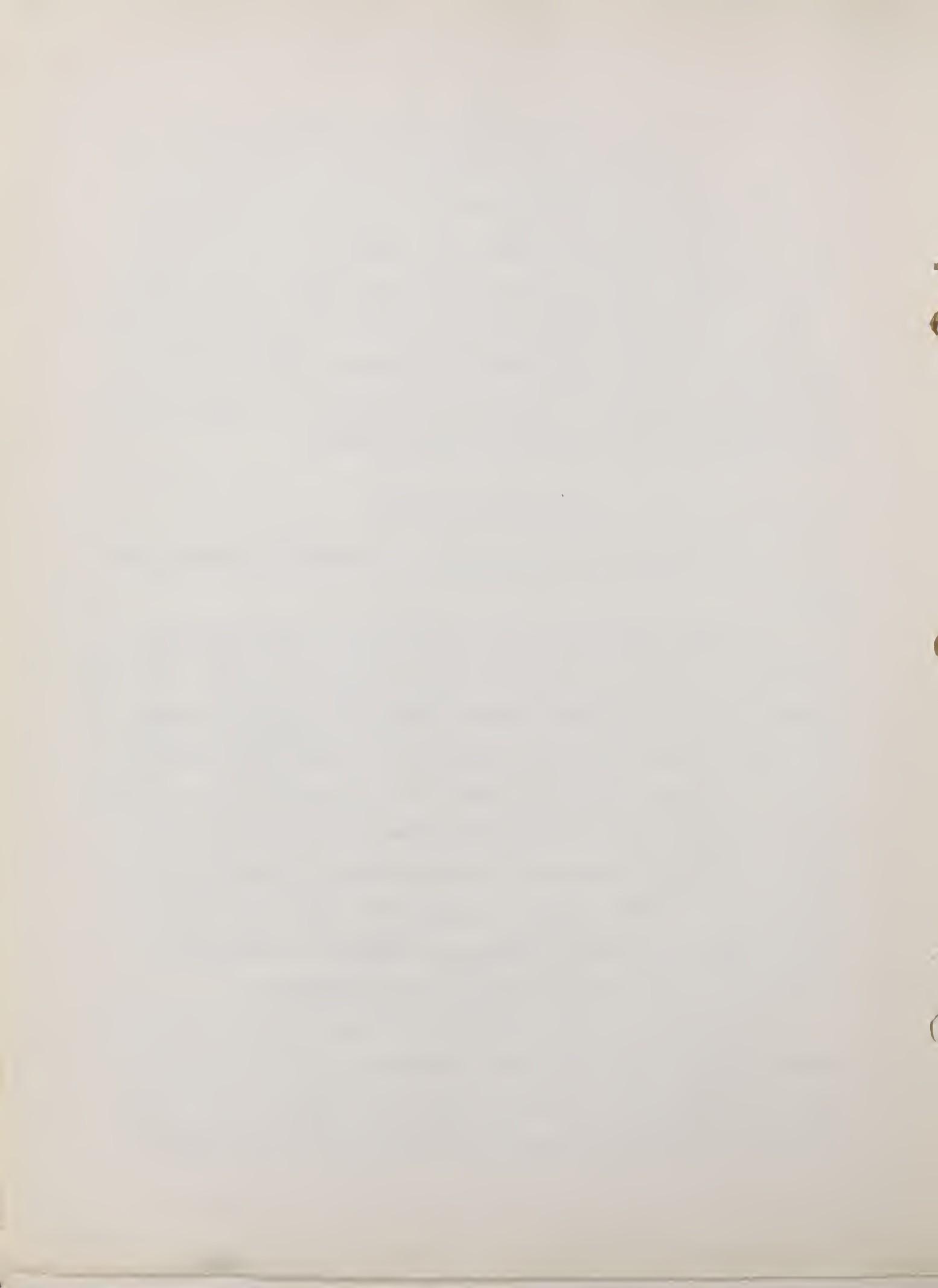
fracturing laws they were unable to join the League Football team, had no football field. The budget had jumped to \$88,087.75 and Mr. George Lovett, the new Superintendent, was receiving \$3,000. The Fortnightly Club had given the High School an electric phonograph and a fine small record library had been established. Manual training classes were successful in the grammar school. Palmer Method Buttons were being awarded to the eight best penmen and students were winning medals and certificates in typing. But what is this familiar complaint? "The Commercial Department is so cramped that we are compelled to use the laboratories for classrooms."

THE PRESENT HIGH SCHOOL

And the democratic process begins its slow unwieldy function once more.

As early as March 10, 1924, a committee was appointed to make recommendations concerning a new high school, the membership having passed the capacity of 100 for which the Pleasant Street building had been designed. This committee was replaced by a committee of 6, plus the School Committee, "none of six other persons to be likely to have a personal business interest in the building of school houses, nor a member of the Warrant Committee." \$600 was allowed for expenses and they were to report at the annual Town Meeting of March, 1926. However, on December 28, 1925, it was voted to erect a High School with an Auditorium and Gymnasium, the Committee to petition the Legislature for permission to borrow \$150,000.

On February 15, 1926, an Article in the Warrant for an appropriation of \$200,000 was defeated 268 to 183. On February 25, the vote was 237 to 205. Bitter arguments prevailed in every corner of Sharon. The Building Committee was divided and both factions wrote letters to the Advocate and



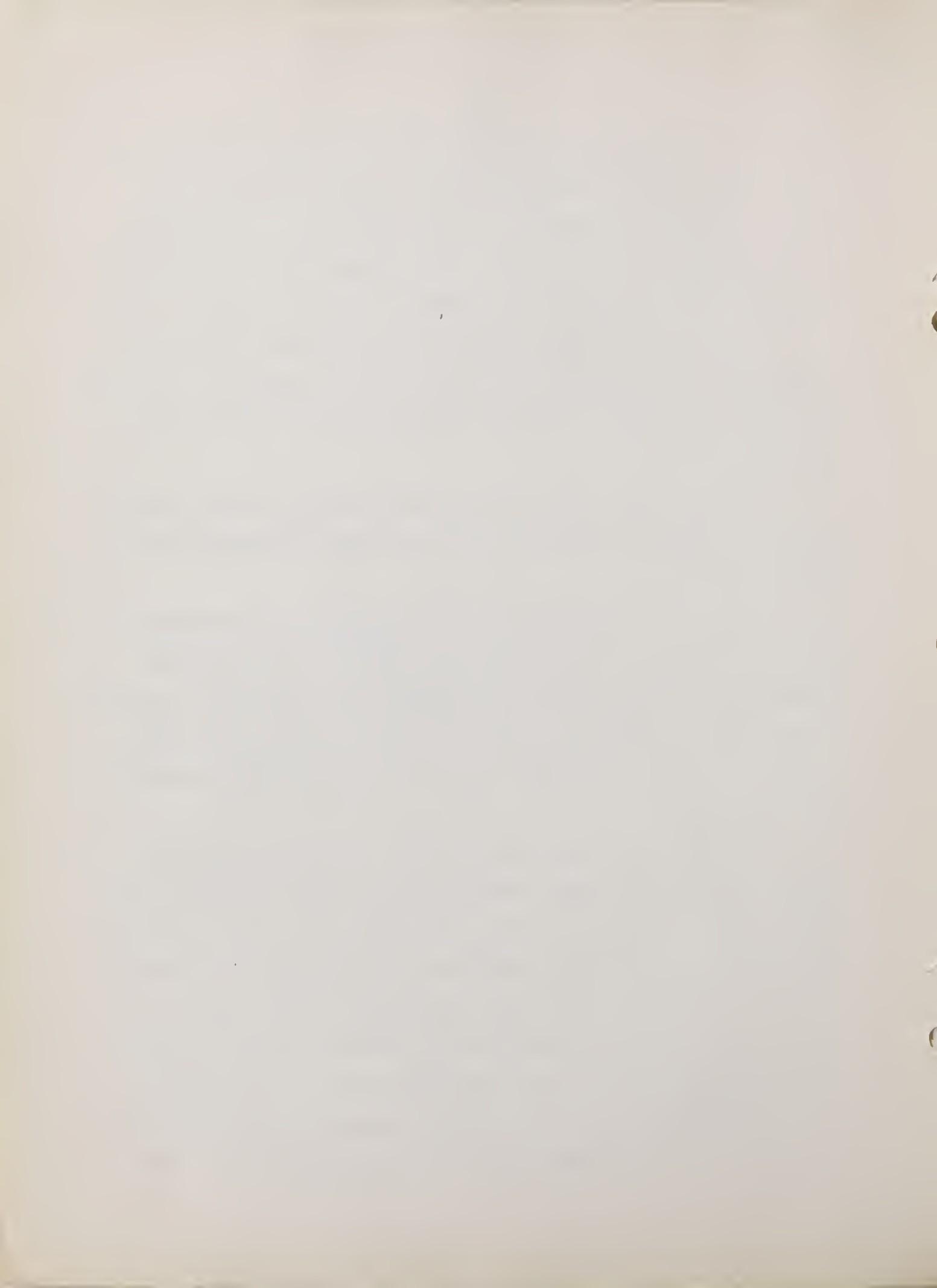
nailed up in the square. Realizing the impossibility of housing the voters in the Town Hall, the Selectmen had erected a large tent on the corner of School and Chestnut Streets, communicating with the Wilber School corridor in which, on March 8, the shivering citizenry voted 435 to 332 against the High School - to the delight of the Boston press.

A special Town Meeting was held in the Town Hall on April 5 with voting on the measure carried on by Australian ballot from 3:00 to 9:00 P.M. The Article again failed to get the necessary two-thirds, being defeated 568 to 426.

As a stop-gap to relieve the crowded situation, to which we shall refer later, \$16,000 was voted on May 24 for radical improvements at the School Street School.

On April 15, the Building Committee suggested as a compromise, a \$135,000 school without either gymnasium or auditorium. Mr. Frederick Bragdon, Superintendent of Schools, presented in his annual report a series of questions and answers, projecting a High School of 242 in 1930 (there actually were 324 in the Six Year High School that year), and urged immediate construction.

It was not until November 28, 1927 that a new Building Committee, the previous Committee having resigned on May 24, 1926, was appointed with instructions to obtain new bids but on that occasion the vote of the town was unanimous. On March 15, 1928 majority and minority reports were submitted by the Committee - the former recommending an appropriation of \$175,000 for a school with a 600 seat auditorium and the latter \$165,000 for a 500 seat auditorium. The voters agreed, 300 to 17, to accept the first recommendation and so - two years and three months after action was initiated - the Building Committee was able to advertise for bids. Work



actually began on June 1. In 1929 \$5400 more was voted for the improvement of the grounds and \$600 for fire doors between the Gilb r section and the High School.

Moving day occurred on Friday, March 22, 1929 when each student carried his books and personal belongings from the Pleasant Street building to a previously assigned locker in the High School. The first assembly was held on Monday, March 25 with everyone enjoying the classic beauty of the new auditorium. The building with its fourteen light, clean, airy rooms; magnificently equipped gymnasium; triple Science laboratories; Music room; Library, modern shop; was the showpiece of the area. Awards were bestowed for the harmony and beauty of design and Sharon's basketball team, with the only modern gym facilities in the League, anticipated triumphs.

And what had been happening to education meanwhile?

"Nothing new or sensational" in 1924 except that 56.5% of the teachers were new. A standard course of study had been adopted in the elementary schools to insure that essentials were covered without duplication of effort. The Stentype Club had been organized in the High School to stimulate interest in the Commercial Course. A detention period existed every afternoon for "pupils failing in lessons, attendance, or deportment." A part-time Home Economics teacher received \$240; the basketball coach, \$75 and the music supervisor, \$562.50.

There was an important item in the Superintendent's report in 1925-

"For some time there has been in existence an organization known as the Sharon Teachers' Association. This association, affiliated with the State Federation of Teachers, is composed of the entire teaching staff of Sharon. Several meetings are held every year, at least three of which are open meetings, addressed by men and women well-known in educational circles.

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Parents are invited to attend these open meetings, to take part in the discussions, and to meet the teachers in a social way. The final meeting of the season last spring took the form of a school exhibition in the Town Hall. All schools had a part on the program, and all were represented in the exhibit. So satisfactory was the response of the parents to this effort of the schools that an exhibition of even greater scope has been planned for the coming year."

The first intelligence tests had been given and Sharon was doing well on both them and standardized tests. The Better English Club of Grade VIII had established a newspaper, Carry On. There were several reference books added to the library. The boys in Grade VII, supervised by a part-time instructor in Manual Training serving through the courtesy of the Boston School Department, were making key-racks, clothes sticks, breadboards, tabourets, stands, radio cabinets, etc.

In response to "the foolish statement often heard on street corners that Sharon High School cannot prepare for college," the Committee quoted actual records and caustically suggested that if parents would make their children "observe proper hours of study and sleep" marks might improve.

Milk was provided for underweight and undernourished elementary children and the Home Economics Class of the Charles K. Wilber School was selling hot cocoa and soup during the winter months to about forty-five children daily. Two girls were appointed every two weeks to run the luncheon service.

The housing situation in the High School required the equipping of Room 2 in the basement for the Freshmen class and the big children lost their lunch area. Faculty and students alike groaned whenever it was necessary to make the long climb from room to classes on the third floor. The Director, isolated from the "big room", felt the same frustration.

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MR. FREDERICK BRAGDON

The format of the annual report for 1926 presented by Mr. Bragdon must have aroused comment in town. Using heavy type, charts, quotations, open pages, he asserted that the majority of High School graduates were not going to college anyway and demanded more courses of a general nature. He declared the large study hall of the High School old-fashioned, the sanitary facilities isolated and inadequate, the building inefficient, and did all he could to spur on the construction of a new school. He commented on the fact that Sharon ranked 197th in the State on expenditures per pupil but agreed that salaries were about average. The following year, when the maximum salary was \$1400, Mr. Bragdon did recommend salary increment based on:

1. Initiative and success in achievement.
2. Personal ambition as shown by the use of leisure time and vacations.
3. Contribution made by suggestions, or cooperation in the administration of the schools.
4. Personal character and moral influence in the community.
5. Scholarship and participation in educational activities.

Mr. Bragdon's own salary, as Superintendent and Principal combined, was \$4000.

When the new High School was finally voted, there were 170 children in Grades IX through XII. The Commercial Department had been moved to the Gillespie House and the domestic science and manual training classes were meeting in the Wilber School.

Mr. Bragdon reported progress under the Seven Cardinal Principles of Education:

1. Health and Safety - A dental clinic and an office for the School

Morse had been provided in the Wilber School.

2. Worth Home Membership - A new type of report card, marking courtesy, cooperation with teachers, industry, honorableness in play, was being used.
3. Mastery of the Tools, Techniques (sic), and Spirit of Learning - Small reading groups had been formed in Grades I and II but achievement otherwise was only average.
4. Citizenship - the American Legion medal for scholarship, physical fitness, and habits and ideals of school citizenship was awarded for the first time - to Morris Gordon of the Class of 1929.
5. Vocational and Economic Effectiveness - No space available.
6. Wise Use of Leisure - Sharon's greatest weakness.
7. Ethical Character - (No comment!)

In 1929 a survey made of the High School by a committee from the School of Education of Harvard University found Sharon children compared favorable with an average of 10,000 pupils. In accordance with their suggestion, the school system was organized on the present 6-6 basis.

1930 brought a fire which put the High Street School out of use for some time, necessitating the reopening of the old High School for temporary quarters.

Most gratifying results accompanied the requirement that every secondary student take a physical education course unless excused by a doctor's certificate. Sharon could say truthfully: "Our reputation for clean play and good sportsmanship is quite general." And writing in competition, Miss Marion Morse won the first Griffith Prize for the best essay on "The Spirit of Sharon."

An interesting experiment was tried in 1931 with the abandonment of annual promotions in the lower grades. The children were grouped and regrouped according to their maturity and achievement. One wonders how the experiment might have been extended had not a change in School Committee

personnel in the Spring of 1932 resulted in the dismissal of the Superintendent of Schools and eight teachers.

MR. FRANK R. PAGE

By this time, a separate Principal had been engaged for the High School and the new Superintendent, Mr. Page, was able to devote all his energies to his theories of education. He believed in "Progress" as distinguished from progressiveness, a term which he abhorred. School rooms, he asserted, must be attractive, colorful, homelike with gay curtains and plants. There was to be no "filling-up" but "awakening." Creative work was encouraged everywhere. Class room libraries were established for all the elementary grades. Geography was taught by imaginary trips on which the children planned itineraries, estimated costs, collected travel folders, and compiled logbooks of their adventures. Composition was taught by the "book" method, with each child carefully saving every illustrated theme for a bound volume, to be carried proudly home at the end of the year. "Talks" were required in every class.

Class trips - to I Piccoli, Alice in Wonderland, Romeo and Juliet, Lexington and Concord, Harvard University, all the museums of Boston - were enjoyed by children of every grade. Speakers of the caliber of Cameron Beck, President of the New York Stock Exchange; Uncle Bob Sherwood, the famous clown; John Mulholland, Dean of Magicians; were regular features of the High School assembly program, although in general, all school activities were planned by counsels of students.

Two Book exhibits proved so successful that two Book Fairs were conducted by students of the Commercial Department. The "All Around Club" was founded for boys of Grades IV through VI and for girls of Grades IV through XII. Small children proudly sported "polite" ribbons and "posture"

badges. The magazine The Voice was reactivated. Commendation slips were issued. The Economics class wrote a pamphlet, Selling Sharon, but looked in vain for a sponsor to publish it. Parents were urged to visit schools and Grade Mothers' Associations came into being. The P. T. A. once again proved a vigorous body, debating the relative merits of cursive or manuscript writing.

There were traditional accomplishments too. A "tutoring" class was established under law, since Sharon had more than ten retarded children. The reading tests showed Sharon above average. A revised spelling list based upon words in actual use, was adopted. Writing greatly improved. Sharon High School was one of 8 from the state, 200 in the country, selected to participate in "a Cooperative Study of Secondary Schools Standards," a study financed by one of the big educational foundations for evolving standards for the improvement and stimulation of the High Schools of the United States.

The teachers now deserve a paragraph of comment. Because of the Great Depression in 1932, the teachers had willingly taken a pay cut of 10%. The School Committee had cut appropriations for two years in a row, salaries dropping from \$48,584 to \$41,820 in 1932. The Teachers Association, noting the fact that most of the towns in the state had maintained normal salaries, requested the restoration of the old amount; all the buildings in town so desperately needed repairs because of neglect and the teachers agreed to wait for a while longer.

Mr. Page's claim implicitly in his position to the former principles of encroaching business as a reasonably valid one. Under the conditions established in connection with those principles there is no reason why

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Home Nursing, Home Mechanics, Choral Singing, Music Appreciation, Applied Art, Safe Auto Driving (out of school), and Sociology. He summarized his beliefs:

1. "We can undertake to make them want to work."
2. We can learn by doing - "purposeful activity."
3. Teach the pupils to Think and Plan, and carry out the plan.
4. Break down the isolating walls that separate school from life.
5. Constantly work to check superficiality, "half-learning."
6. Inculcate Responsibility, Promptness, Good Sportsmanship, Paintstaking, Courtesy, Good Posture, Good Enunciation.
7. The school needs the cooperation of parents.
8. School rooms should be attractive, pleasant and interesting.
9. The school should be of service to the community.

The whole-hearted support of his program is evinced by the fact that in a two-year period, 21 of the 31 teachers were taking courses.

Unexpected expense for the town was caused in 1937 when examination showed that the ceilings of the new auditorium, six classrooms, both corridors, and the girls' room, were in dangerous condition. Red streaks appeared in the roof and a new parapet wall was required because of faulty construction. Since the contractor had died and the firm had gone out of existence, the town had no recourse but to retain the services of contractors.

Mr. Page's sudden death on September 2, 1937 brought grief to the many, many children who were in his library or visiting him in his office and to so many of whom he had opened the enchanting world of books. In consequence with his vision, a large part of his personal library was donated to the High School, where we find a small, well equipped library which now displays some 1400 books. He was succeeded in our regiment by Mr.

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Frederick G. Ward, Principal of the High School.

In 1940, A. Russell Mack, Supervisor of Secondary Education of the Massachusetts Department of Education was "elated at the forward look and general progress of the schools."

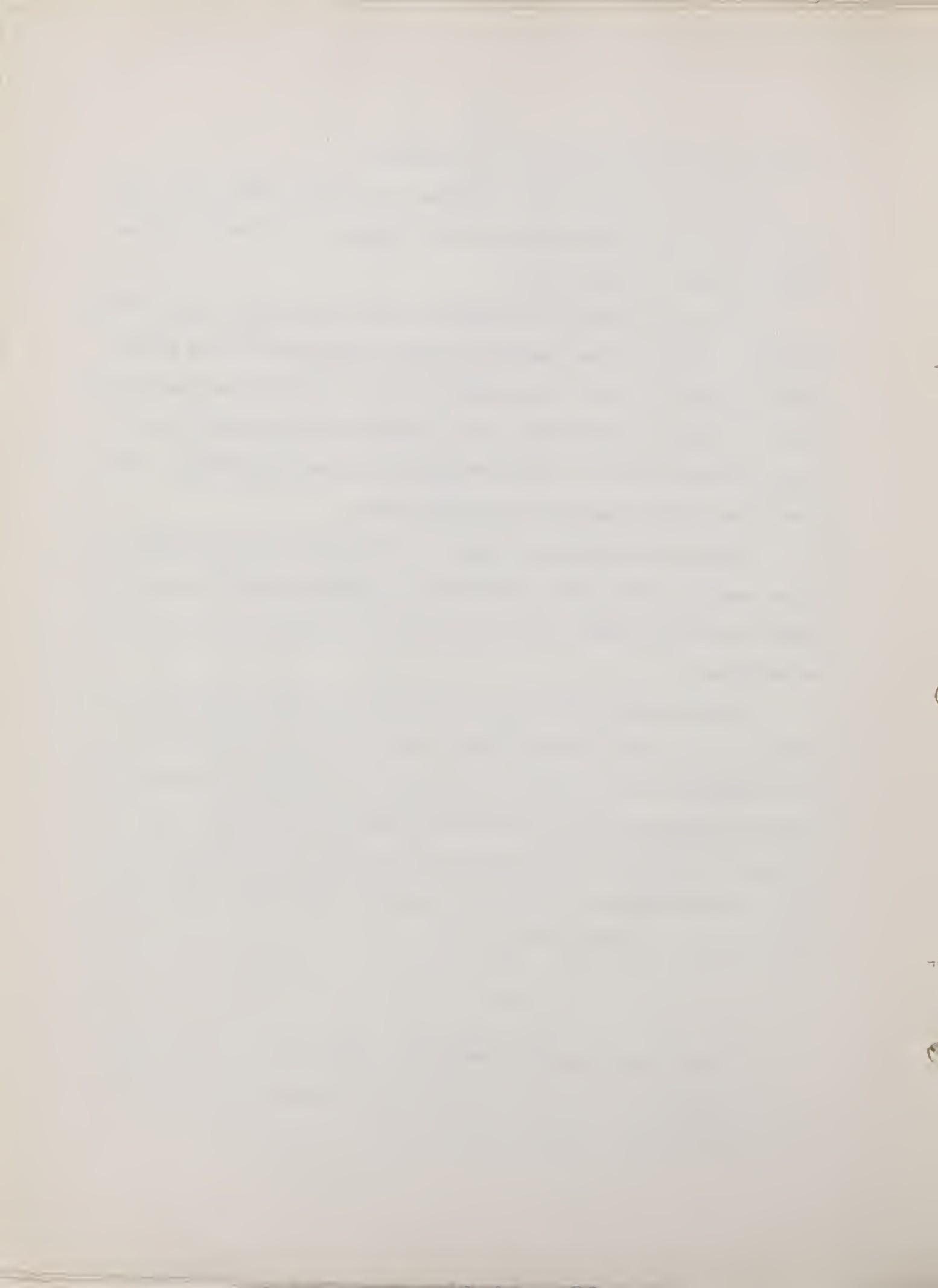
The practice continued of making a survey of one major subject field each year, reading in the elementary grades in 1939 and the whole social studies program in 1940. In accordance with the suggestions of the Harvard Survey, a counsel of three High School teachers was appointed to do personal guidance, holding a private conference with each individual. A beginning was made of placement with some success.

Newspaper attention was focused upon Sharon when in accordance with plans made by Mr. Page, seven Sharon boys and girls exchanged classes and homes with seven students of the Roslyn, New York High School for a period of two weeks.

The High School cafeteria, which had been operated originally by an outside manager on a non-profit basis, was brought under the supervision of the Domestic Science teacher. Grants made by the National Youth Administration made it possible to use seven students as assistants. The schools and town benefited from the Works Progress Administration in 1939 when the present tennis courts were constructed, partly with funds given by the Sharon Parent-Teacher Association.

M. R. G. H. D. L.

Changes in administration occurred in 1940 when Mr. John W. H. McIntosh became Superintendent and Mr. Harold C. Clark became Principal of the High School, combining a combined program.



1. To utilize all facilities to serve the war effort.
 2. To train the children to win and to keep the ultimate peace.
 3. To maintain efficiency in spite of rising costs and war difficulties.

The teachers performed valiant service during World War II. A large number, both men and women, served in the armed forces. All the teachers cheerfully helped with draft registrations and registrations for the rationing of sugar, gasoline, fuel oil, canned foods, and later, shoes. The children's salvage unit reached 200% of its quota and became the second largest unit in the state. They bought, in one year, \$2970 worth of war stamps and bonds. They collected old aluminum pans, scrap metal, toothpaste tubes, great balls of tinfoil, and enormous bags of milkweed floss which hung drying on the tennis court. They participated with the teachers in Civil Defense units and in the Red Cross.

In addition to a Pre-Flight aeronautics course in Science, specialized pre-induction courses were offered in Basic Math, the Fundamentals of Aircraft, Electricity, Machines, Auto-Mechanics, and Radio. Basic Military Drill was taught by the American Legion. Girls took courses in First Aid and Home Nursing. Boys became members of the State Guard unit. Social life was not completely forgotten - six organizations cooperated with the schools in a Teen-age Winter Activity program which provided wholesome recreation for every Friday evening in January, February and March. Several improvements were introduced. The Varsity football team was upgraded. A new fire drill station, located in a large hall, was built at the High School. New classrooms, new office space, new dormitory, new dining room, new gymnasium, new swimming pool, new athletic facilities and modern equipment, new dormitory, new mess hall, new officers' mess, new dormitory, new conditions for the old dormitory, new



recommendation of the Harvard Survey, were abandoned. Still another report card was adopted. Sharon High School became a member of the National Honor Society.

Mr. Poole urged the formation of a professional library for the faculty and a Workshop for the evaluation of the entire system. He believed that the teachers should have a greater share in the formation of school policies and in the plans for alterations and improvements. He proposed a Five Year Plan of definite and specific activities, among them the organization of the Junior and Senior High School for increasing student participation in the government of the school. Education for all American Youth was the subject of faculty study.

Upon parental request, the entering age of school was lowered to 5 years and 6 months on September 1 for those children who were passed after observation and examination by the state travelling school psychiatrist clinic. Clinical assistance from the State Department of Mental Health was used increasingly in guidance.

A Federal subsidy made it possible for the cafeteria to offer the children a balanced lunch for 15¢.

Mr. Poole found it necessary to explain to the town why school busses were not listed: "Callin' two minutes from the station and then I'd have to sit 200 minutes of teachin' time for each individual child." It would be well to call up the department office later on the situation of school busses.

In 1949, one suggestion, that is largely to my mind, was that we wanted suggestions to the town, on how to proceed with an appropriate program of education to our own educational system, 1949-1950 and next year. Following, are for the consideration of possibly pertinent:

non-resident children at the Sharon Sanitorium.

Mr. Poole, alarmed by the fact that 20 of 34 teachers and 4 of 7 clerks and janitors in September, 1945 were new to the system, urged the adoption of periodic salary increases. New teachers, he warned, might be inadequate and short of quality. To strengthen the morale of his staff, he recommended the adoption of a united philosophy of education. This is the statement adopted by the Teachers of Sharon and the Sharon School Committee:

"It is the responsibility of the Sharon schools to help boys and girls grow and develop to the fullest extent of their individual possibilities into citizens who are able and eager to fulfill their democratic responsibilities and who, within themselves, hold the skills, attitudes, and ideals, requisite for living a satisfying and worthwhile life. We would accomplish this by creating opportunities where children may learn by participating in democratic experiences at their own levels of development."

Consternation was caused in 1945 when the State Department of Public Safety refused to issue a building certificate to the High Street School unless there were new toilets, a separate boiler room, improved heating and ventilating, a teachers' room, and safe electric fixtures. The Committee recommended a new building, but the town appropriated \$16,000 for the renovations and three classes were assigned rooms in the Wilber School, the fourth in the basement of the Pleasant Street school, until the completion of the work.

MR. JOHN B. GRIFFIN

Mr. Griffin came to Sharon to find teachers dissatisfied with working conditions and housing, not improving in collaboration in school problems. The former grievance was corrected by a unanimous decision of the Board of Education to increase all salaries, and the latter problem

Mr. Chaffee's watchword was: "Good education is good business." He taught the town to consider education as an investment. His philosophy was based upon Imperative Needs of Youth, the 1944 yearbook of the Educational Policy Commission of the National Education Association.

In 1948 he made projected estimates of the growth of the school population, based upon school membership on January 1, 1949 of 830. There were then fourteen elementary classrooms, with more than 30 children in nine of them.

1949	Estimate	869	Actuality	893
1950	"	902	"	980
1951	"	980	"	1114
1952	"	1044	"	1304

After lengthy and again heated debate about soil and drainage, the town voted in March, 1948, to purchase a site on Cottage Street, other suggested sites having been rejected. A Committee was appointed to make preliminary plans for a new Elementary School. In 1949 a Building Committee was appointed with a grant of \$20,000 for preliminary specifications, consultants, etc., for the Cottage Street School. In 1950 at the March meeting \$425,000 was appropriated for the building and in November, \$35,000 for equipment and furnishing. Because the town still continued to grow at an unprecedented rate, on March, 1953 it was necessary to vote \$247,000 for the construction of an addition to this Cottage Street School. The Cottage Street site, originally recommended in 1946, cost \$6,000. Equipment and furnishing, cost \$50,000 more.

Mr. Chaffee reported in 1947 that buildings designed for 750 children were built up to 1000 with no additional room. In 1948 all buildings, however, were built and occupied, with no available space. In 1950 the addition to the existing school, which followed immediately

sciences, and several sciences. He was pleased by the fact that the Drama Council had been re-vitalized in the High School.

MR. HERMAN H. RICHARDSON

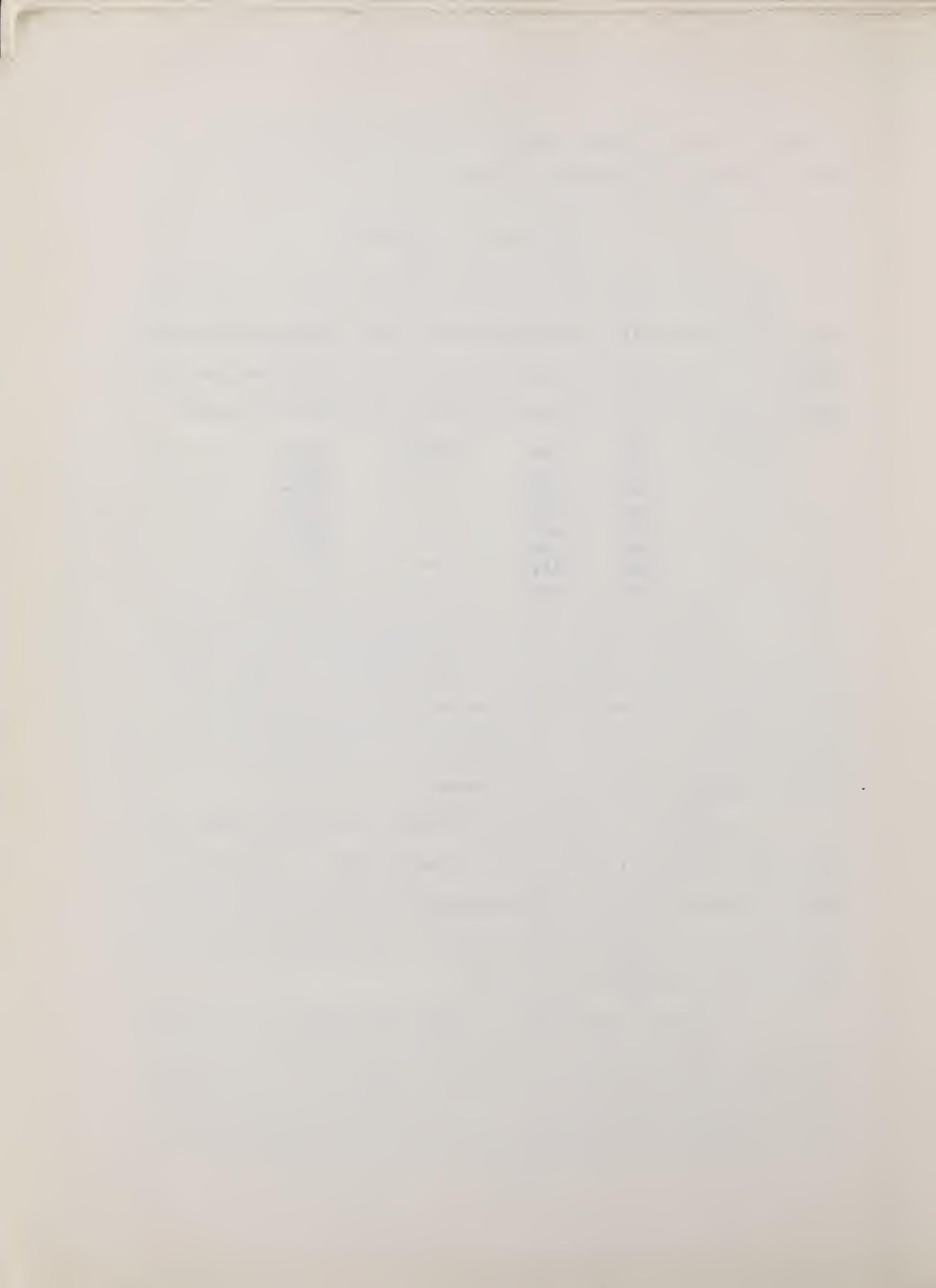
The necessity for more and more schools will always be associated by the townspeople with Mr. Richardson, who became Superintendent in 1950. Warned by the fact that the Cottage School had been opened two years too late, he began his own projections of school populations as follows:

Estimate	1951	1114	Actuality	1114
"	1952	1209	"	1304
"	1953	1310	"	1479
"	1954	1394	"	1706
"	1955	1483	"	1908
"	1956	1559	"	2119
"	1957	1637	"	?
"	1958	1688	"	?

At Town Meeting in 1952 a School building Expansion Committee of ten was created, consisting of the Superintendent of Schools, five elected members, and one representative each from the Selectmen, the Warrant Committee, the School Committee, and the Planning Board. The life of this Committee continues to be extended.

An attempt to purchase the White Wing farm site of South Main Street for a Heights elementary school being defeated, it was not until June 29, 1953 that the site of the existing Heights School was purchased with a preliminary appropriation of \$30,000. \$630,000 was allocated in 1954 for the construction of the school.

At the same Town Meeting, it was voted to buy a site of. Ame Court and Roni Street for the construction of a new High School. The Building Committee recommended in 1955, an expenditure of \$2,000,000 but left to the voters the decision as to the size of the auditorium. The



meeting voted in favor of an auditorium seating 1200 at an added cost of \$150,000. Because the legality of this action was questioned, at a special town meeting in July, the vote was taken properly but no further action could be taken because all the bids submitted were higher than the sum appropriated by the town. After months of frenzied checking of estimates and specifications, the Building Committee was able to submit to the March meeting in 1956, a firm figure of \$2,100,000 which was voted unanimously. Drainage and preliminary work on the site began during the early summer and the building is scheduled for occupation in September, 1957.

But other building problems remained. Also in March, 1956, the town voted to purchase the so-called Monk property off East Street for the purpose of constructing another elementary school. In March, 1957, the town appropriated \$845,000 for the construction of the Sharon East Elementary School, plus \$3,250 for a road and \$2,480. Will this be the final structure in our building program? Who can tell!

The constant search for available rooms and the headaches associated with double sessions have not been Mr. Richardson's only pre-occupations. He has initiated the workshops for elementary teachers which precedes the opening of school in September. He has continued the administration of Iowa Tests in Grades 3 through 7 and, with the teachers, can take great pride in the superior achievement of our children. The teachers are deeply grateful for his sincere and continuing interest in the revision of the salary schedule. We believe it due to his voluntary effort that we too can say:

"We have in Sharon a modern school system that we had last year or five years ago.... The credit for this goes to the citizens of Sharon.... the school committee."



to the teachers...to the pupils...and to our Superintendent to whom we express our gratitude for his understanding, his support, and his inspiration.

The Sharon Public Schools:

1757	5 schools	5 teachers	5 rooms	Appropriation \$20
1957	8 schools in use or under construction	90 teachers and staff members	116 rooms	Appropriation \$600,000

What will the report be in 2057?



SUPPLEMENT I

COURSE OF STUDY 1900

FIRST GRADE

READING - Teach by the sentence and word method beginning with script letters on the blackboard, followed by primer and first half of first readers. Use phonic analysis (Ward's Rational Method in Reading). Insist upon natural expression and be sure that the child has the thought before he attempts expression. Question the child to bring out the emphasis. Keep a list of the words learned and constantly review them. Teach all new words before attempting to read. Let most of the reading be at sight. Have the pupil tell in his own language the story he has read.

SPELLING - Begin by copying words from the reading lesson. Spell orally the simplest words.

LANGUAGE - In connection with all exercises encourage the pupils to acquire freedom and correctness in original expressions. Write short sentences using for example teacher's name, child's name, name of the town. Teach the use of the period, question mark, exclamation mark, capital I. Nature studies are valuable for language work also pictures.

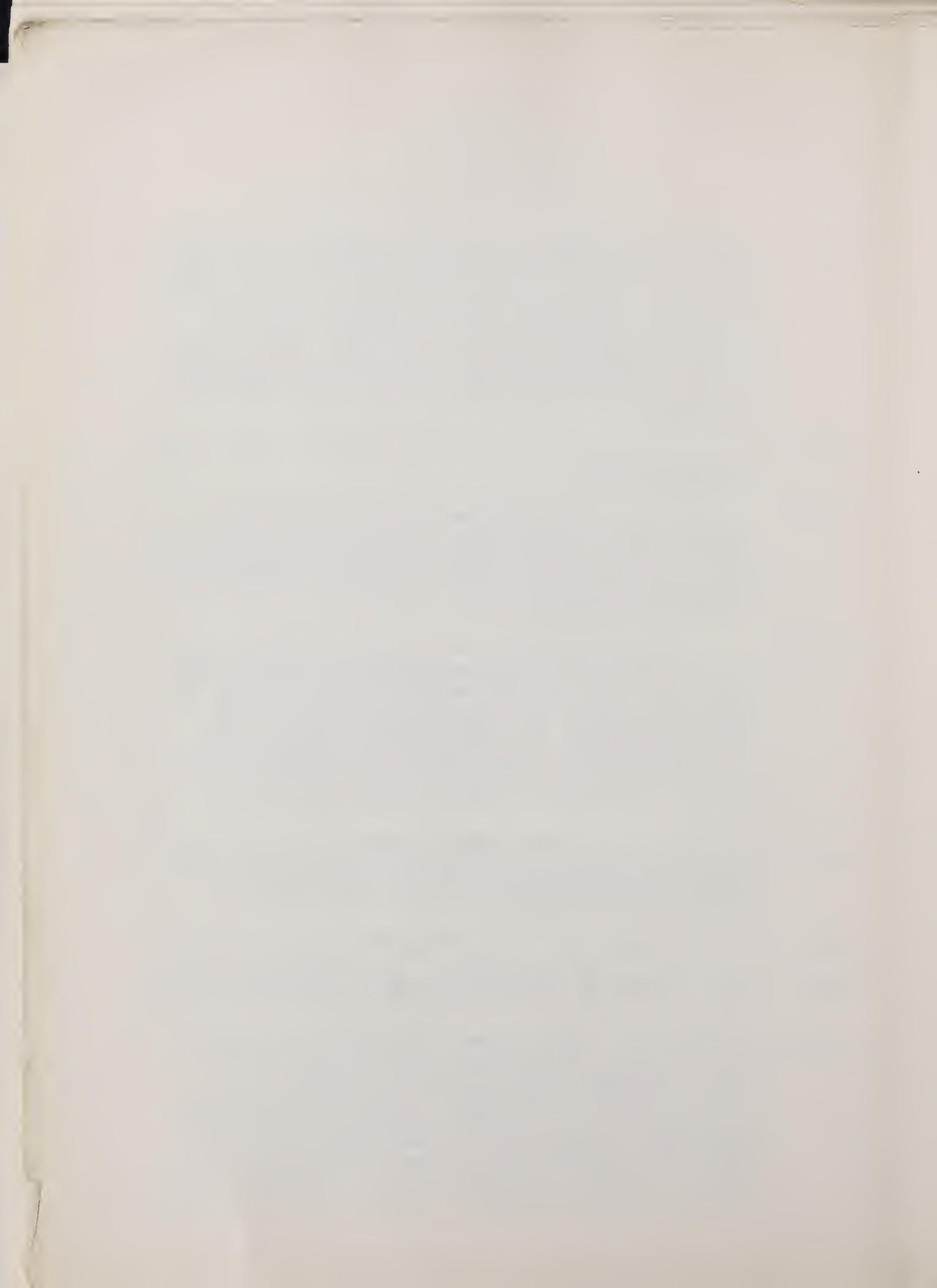
ARITHMETIC - (1) Numbers with objects from 1-10 in all combinations. It is well to teach at first two combinations, addition and subtraction to five and then review from the beginning. (2) Teach expressions of the above numbers by figures, Roman numerals and words. (3) Teach fractions $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{4}$. (4) Applied numbers. One-cent piece, nickel, dime, pint, quart, inch foot, yard. Give many mental problems for drill work after the number has been thoroughly taught from the object.

WRITING - Teach the letters in the following order: (1) i u w n m x v y (2) o a e r s; (3) t p d q (4) l b h k; (5) j z y g f. Copy words and sentences on practice paper taking special care that the spaces are filled.

DRAWING - Teach the state course as outlined by the teacher of drawing.

MUSIC - Teach in grades the course outlined by the Supervisor of Music paying special attention to voice building and sight reading.

OBSERVATION LESSONS - (1) Common plants, trees and shrubs; name and place of growth; parts: flower, leaf, root, stem, fruit. Simple and striking qualities and uses. Observation of germinating seeds. (2) Animals: Common animals, birds and insects, names, obvious features, qualities and uses. (3) Human Body: The whole body, noticeable parts, care, health, cleanliness, comforts, movements, temperance and morals. At least one recitation period per week. (4) Minerals: Common minerals, prominent qualities and uses. (5) Natural Phenomena:



Simple lessons on sun, wind, rain, snow, ice. (6) Miscellaneous work. Names of common things, actions and qualities, relative position, primary colors, information about common things, points of the compass, name of town and state, right hand, left hand.

SECOND GRADE

READING - Teach last half of first readers, second readers. See that all new words are first taught at the blackboard, use phonic drill. Let no pupil read a sentence until the thought is grasped so he can read without hesitation. Be sure that each child is giving proper inflection. Require correct pronunciation.

SPELLING - Copying words and sentence. Develop power to copy accurately. Oral spelling of common words.

LANGUAGE - First year's work continued. Several statements about one subject to be united by proper connectives. Days of the week, months, seasons, year; abbreviations for the same. Possessive singular, use of the apostrophe. Reproduce short stories read or told by the teacher. Teach the correct use of words pronounced alike but spelled differently.

ARITHMETIC - Numbers from 10-20 or more in all combinations. Tables as far as 6×6 . Use signs of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Count and write to 100. Roman notation to XX. Fractions $1/2$, $1/3$, $1/4$, $1/5$, $1/6$, $1/7$, $1/8$, $1/9$, $1/10$. U. S. money. Pint, quart, gallon, inch, foot, yard.

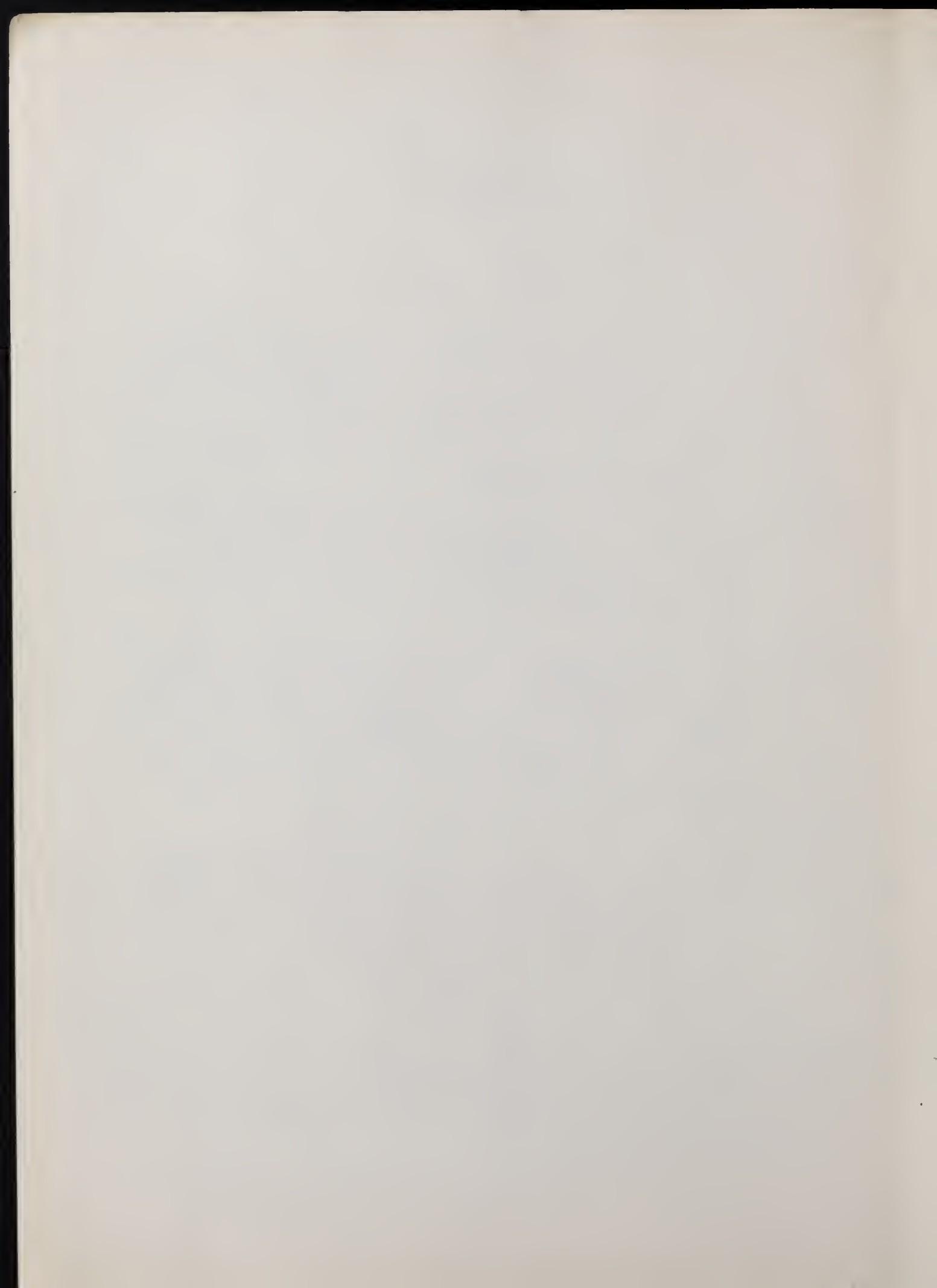
WRITING - Correct position of holding the pen. Finger movements. Duttonian System.

MUSIC AND DRAWING - as before.

OBSERVATION LESSONS - (1) As before. Add resemblances and differences noted. (2) - (5) As before. (6) Miscellaneous Work: Parts of objects, uses, qualities - tough, brittle, elastic, fragrant, opaque, transparent, porous, fluid, solid, etc. Colors - orange, green purple, gray and tints of these.

THIRD GRADE

READING - Second Readers and supplementary stories. Reading at sight. Learn and recite appropriate selections of poetry. Observe and explain the use of all marks, abbreviations and contractions used in the reading lessons. Cultivate distinct tones and conversational expressions.



SPELLING - Oral and written spelling - drill on common words. Review difficult words often and spelled.

LANGUAGE - Reproduce or copy of stories read memory exercises. Dictate sentences, especially such as bring in exclamation point, apostrophe in contractions and possessives, dash at end of line, the use of commas. Copy paragraphs from the reading lesson. Vary the exercises from day to day. Write letters, noticing carefully margin and paragraph. Correct use of words pronounced alike and spelled differently.

ARITHMETIC - Fundamental processes to 1000. All the tables. Unit signs of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and arrange figures in columns. Rapid addition, allowing no counting. Simple fractions. Mental arithmetic. U. S. money in making change. Always make change by adding. Ounce, pound, peck, bushel, second, minute, hour. Roman numerals to C.

GEOGRAPHY - Begin with the schoolroom - teach direction, points of the compass, direction of places and building from the schoolhouse. Draw plans of desks, floor of school-room, school-yard to scale. Some geography - size of town, shape, boundaries, weather, occupations, location, surface, soil, drainage, productions, occupations, animals, inhabitants, streets, railroad, villages, public building, hills, ponds, streams of water, industries. Give familiar talks and readings to interest the children in the plants, animals, minerals and peoples of different countries and climates. Collect pictures to illustrate natural features. Use molding board for forms of land and water. Use the glove. Encourage the children to visit interesting localities and describe the places visited.

WRITING - Daily drill in the formation of small and capital letters. Have a good copy always on the board. Use practice paper.

MUSIC AND DRAWING - See Grade I.

OBSERVATION LESSONS - (1) Plants: Common plants, trees and shrubs, name and place of growth. Parts and shape of leaf and flower, blade, veins, margin, stipules, petals, sepals, stamens, pistil, calyx, corolla. Simple comparison of parts of different plants. Simple uses of plants. Observation of germinating seeds and of development of parts of plants. (2) Animals: Study of some animals and animals native to the town. Names, comparison, parts and comparison of parts, use of parts, habits and uses of different animals, resemblances and differences in habits and uses. (3) Human Body: food, drink, work, rest, recreation. Protection against sickness. Functions and care of parts. Temperance and morals - one recitation period per week. (4) Minerals: Varieties of soil, stones, minerals found in town, qualities and uses of them. (5) Natural Phenomena: Review of second year's work. Simple lessons on the early physical history of the earth with special reference to the formation of continents and oceans.

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FOURTH GRADE

READING - Third Readers and supplementary reading. Vocal drill. Pay particular attention to silent reading. Require oral and written productions. Cultivate a taste for wholesome reading.

LANGUAGE - Reproduce orally and in writing, observation lessons, picture lessons, stories read and told by the pupils. Letter writing. Correct use of difficult words like sit-set, lie-lay, lain-laid, lying-laying, sitting-setting. Correct use of words spelled differently but pronounced alike.

ARITHMETIC - Fundamental processes to a million. Simple common fractions and decimals to two places. Principal weights and measures. Mental arithmetic. Roman numerals to M.

GEOGRAPHY - Geography of Sharon, Norfolk County, Massachusetts, North American to South America. Map drawing. Read Geographical stories. Use the molding board.

WRITING - Use practice paper. Daily drill in copying sentences from the blackboard.

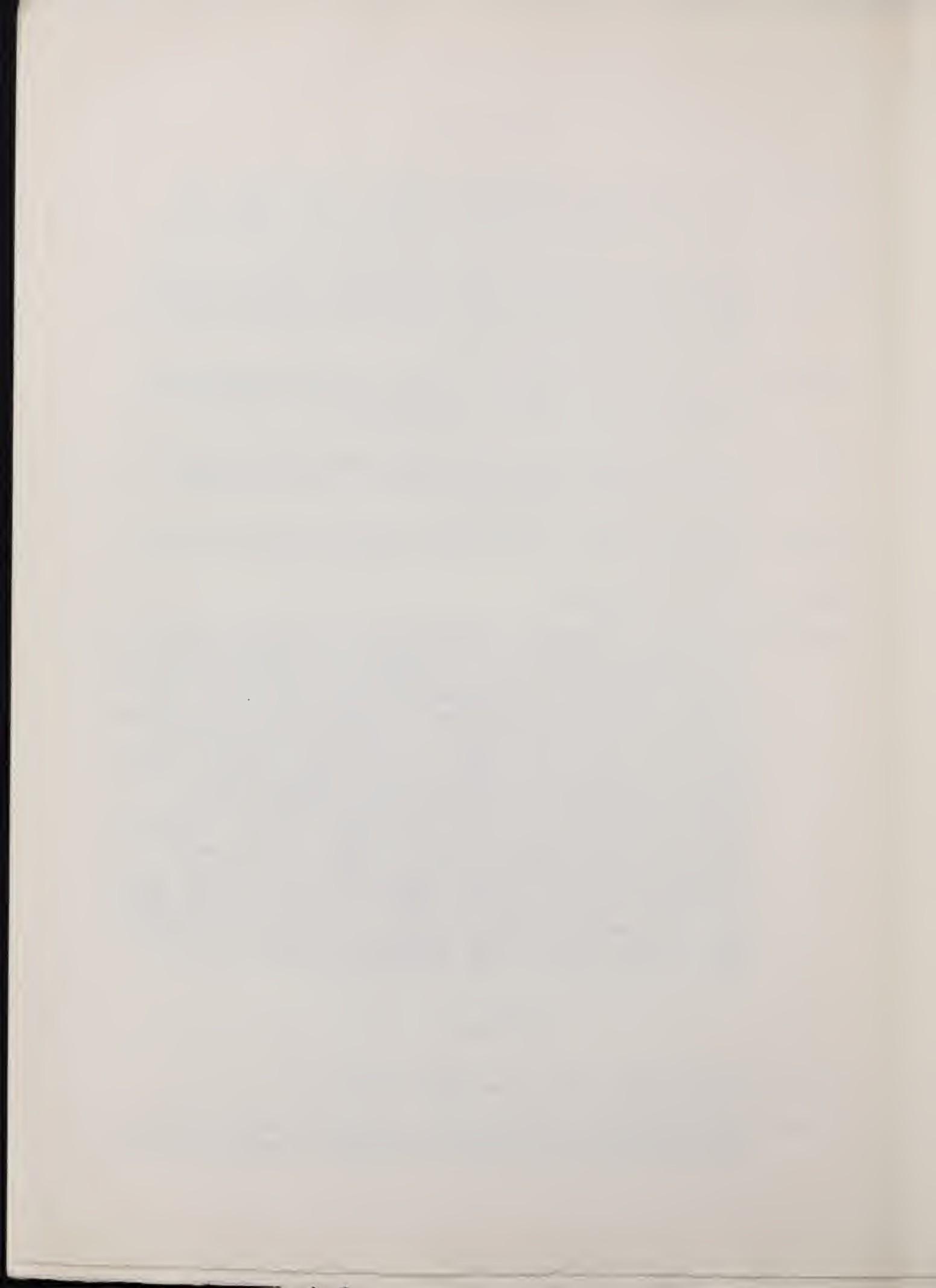
MUSIC AND DRAWING - As before.

OBSERVATION LESSONS - (1) Plants: Systematic lessons on parts of plants and history of plant life. (2) Animals: Group animals according to resemblance - grass-eating, flesh-eating, gnawing, hooved, swimming animals, etc. Differences in character, habits, etc. of animals of different zones and continents. Changes in animals. Special study of tadpole and frog. (3) Human Body: Review of care and uses of parts of body. Correct habits. Proper food, drink, play, work, rest, clothing, cleanliness, pure air. Proper sanitary conditions. Object and value of physical training. Effect of education on the mind. Emergency lesson, fainting, stopping flow of blood, cleansing and binding wounds. Temperance and morals - one recitation period per week. (4) Minerals: Study of most important minerals, principal qualities, uses and in what parts of the world most abundantly found. Special study of the most important minerals of the U. S. and N. S. - qualities, uses, locations. (5) Natural Phenomena: The sun and its effect upon the earth. The moon and its changes. Changes in form of water. Effects of heat, cold, wind, moisture.

FIFTH GRADE

READING - Fourth Readers, etc. Swiss Family Robinson.

LANGUAGE - Memory exercises. Letter writing. Reproduce stories read silently by the pupils or read to them by the teacher. Describe pictures.



Dictate sentences for punctuation, for capitals, for words spelled alike and pronounced differently. For words spelled differently and pronounced alike.

ARITHMETIC - Fundamental processes review and completed. Simple common fractions. Mental arithmetic. Make out bills for labor, coal, wood, stationery, books, etc. Elementary arithmetic.

GEOGRAPHY - Elementary geography, South America finish book and review. Pay particular attention to location of places. Watch carefully for changes in geographical facts. Use topics such as position, boundaries, size, climate mountains, rivers, lakes, peninsulas, capes, seas, gulfs, bays, productions, inhabitants, manners, customs, occupations, chief towns and cities, noted localities, historical facts. Map drawing.

WRITING - Book No. 4, large.

MUSIC AND DRAWING - See Grade I.

OBSERVATION LESSONS - See Grade IV.

SIXTH GRADE

READING - American History Stories, Hawthorne's Tanglewood Tales, Carpenter's South America, etc.

SPELLING - Graves' Speller, continue from Grade V.

LANGUAGE - Memory Exercises, reproduction, dictation and description as in previous grades. Watch carefully the spelling in language lessons and use misspelled words in spelling lessons.

ARITHMETIC - Fractions and denominate numbers. Be thorough.

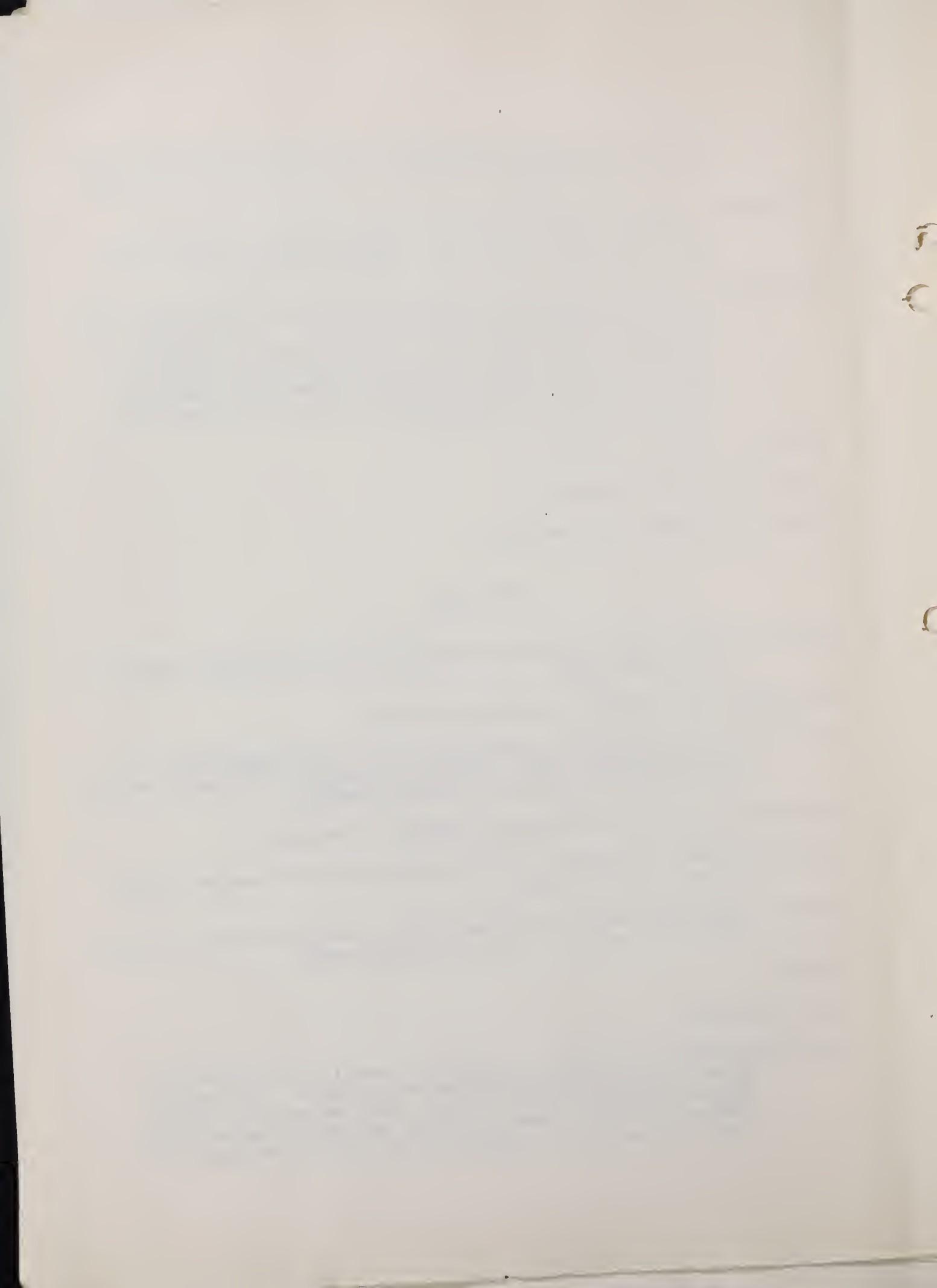
GEOGRAPHY - Advanced geography to minor countries of North America. Teach by topics and draw maps.

HISTORY - Reading and talks on American history, the object being to interest the pupils and give a taste for further study.

WRITING

MUSIC AND DRAWING

OBSERVATION LESSONS - (1) Plants: systematic lessons on differences in parts and habits of plants and on use of plants. (2) Animals: Special study of classes of birds - land, water and air birds. Changes in animals, special study of caterpillar, butterfly and moth. Special study of animals native to North America, South



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America, and Europe; character and uses. (3) Human Body: Systematic study of parts of human body and care of each. Bones, muscles, skin, organs of digestion and assimilation, circulation, respiration, nervous system, senses. Temperance and morals, one recitation period per week. (4) Special study of the minerals of the U. S., British America, Mexico, South America, Europe - qualities, uses, special location, abundance, manner of obtaining. (5) Natural Phenomena: How the earth was formed, soil, mountains, oceans, islands, volcanoes, earthquakes, glacier, ice-bergs. Work of the sun, rainbows.

SEVENTH GRADE

READING - Keep ever in mind that pupils in this grade are "Reading to Learn." Enoch Arden, Carpenter's North America, etc.

SPELLING - Finish and review Speller.

LANGUAGE - Continue previous suggestions. Write abstracts of lessons in geography and history. Choice abstracts to be learned and recited.

ARITHMETIC - Advanced arithmetic from the beginning in percentage. Mental arithmetic.

GEOGRAPHY - Advanced. Minor countries of North America, South America and Europe, Map drawing.

HISTORY - Advanced to 1789.

WRITING -

MUSIC AND DRAWING

OBSERVATION LESSONS - See Grade VI.

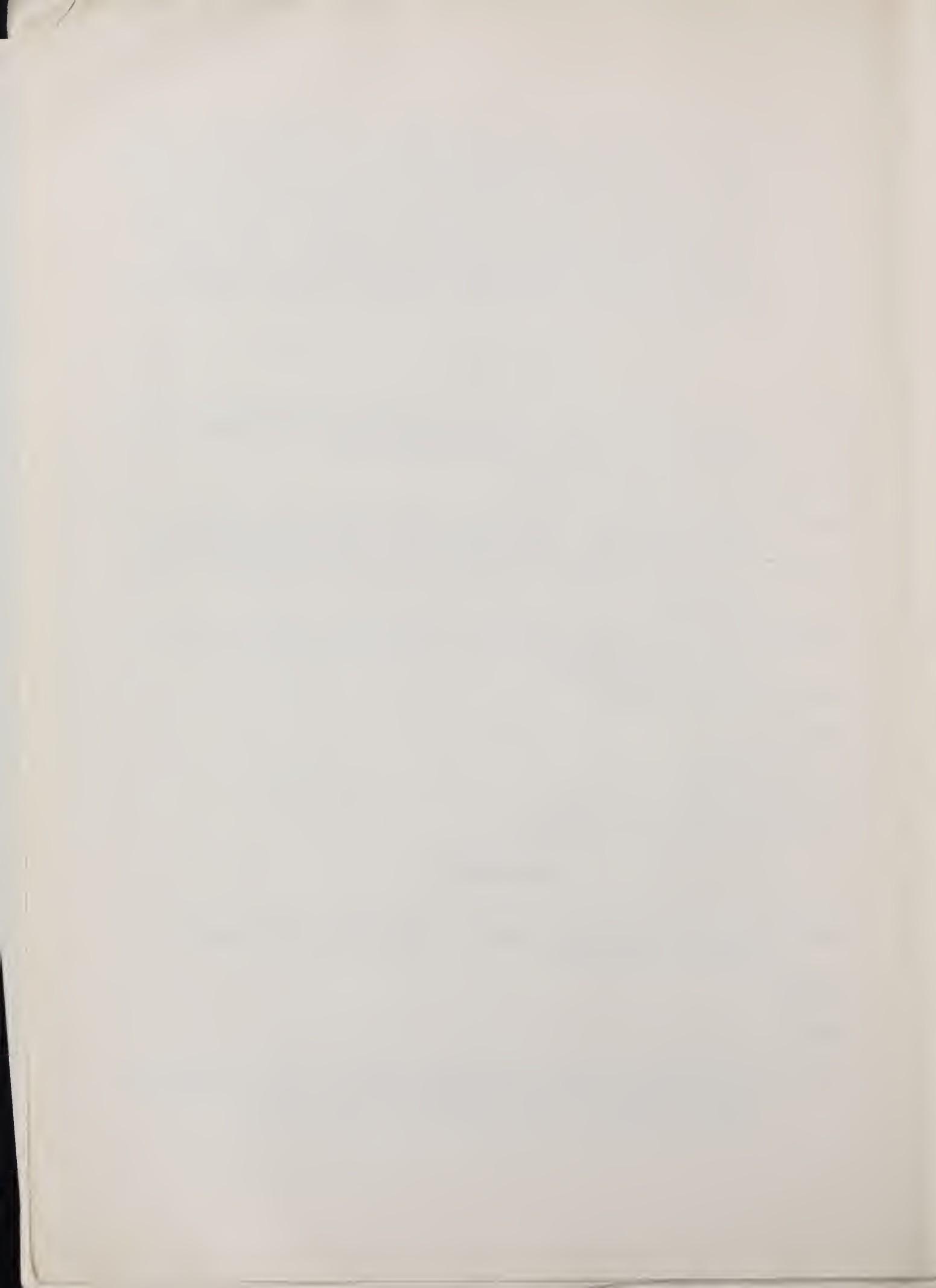
EIGHTH GRADE

READING - Evangeline, Snowbound, Marmion, Courtship of Miles Standish, Carpenter's Asia, etc.

SPELLING

GRAMMAR

ARITHMETIC - Percentage to Ratio, Advanced Arithmetic. Keep constantly reviewing subjects taken up in previous years, when it is manifest that the subject has been forgotten or never grasped.



GEOGRAPHY - Completed and thoroughly reviewed.

HISTORY - From 1789 through and reviewed. Do not allow the words of the book to be memorized. Require pupils to make maps of the progress of discoveries and settlements. Use maps in military campaigns. Memorize only the most important dates.

WRITING

MUSIC AND DRAWING

OBSERVATION LESSONS - (1) Plants. (2) Animals: Special study of the principal minerals of Asia, Africa, Australia and the Pacific Islands, qualities, uses, special location, abundance, manner of obtaining.

NINTH GRADE

READING - Sketch-Book, Ivanhoe, additional Books.

SPELLING - Words from regular lessons, newspapers.

GRAMMAR - Advanced through the year.

ARITHMETIC - Advanced, finish and review Fall and Winter terms. In reviewing, let there be a selection of problems on many subjects often.

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY - Fall term.

PHYSIOLOGY - Winter term.

CIVIL GOVERNMENT - Spring term.

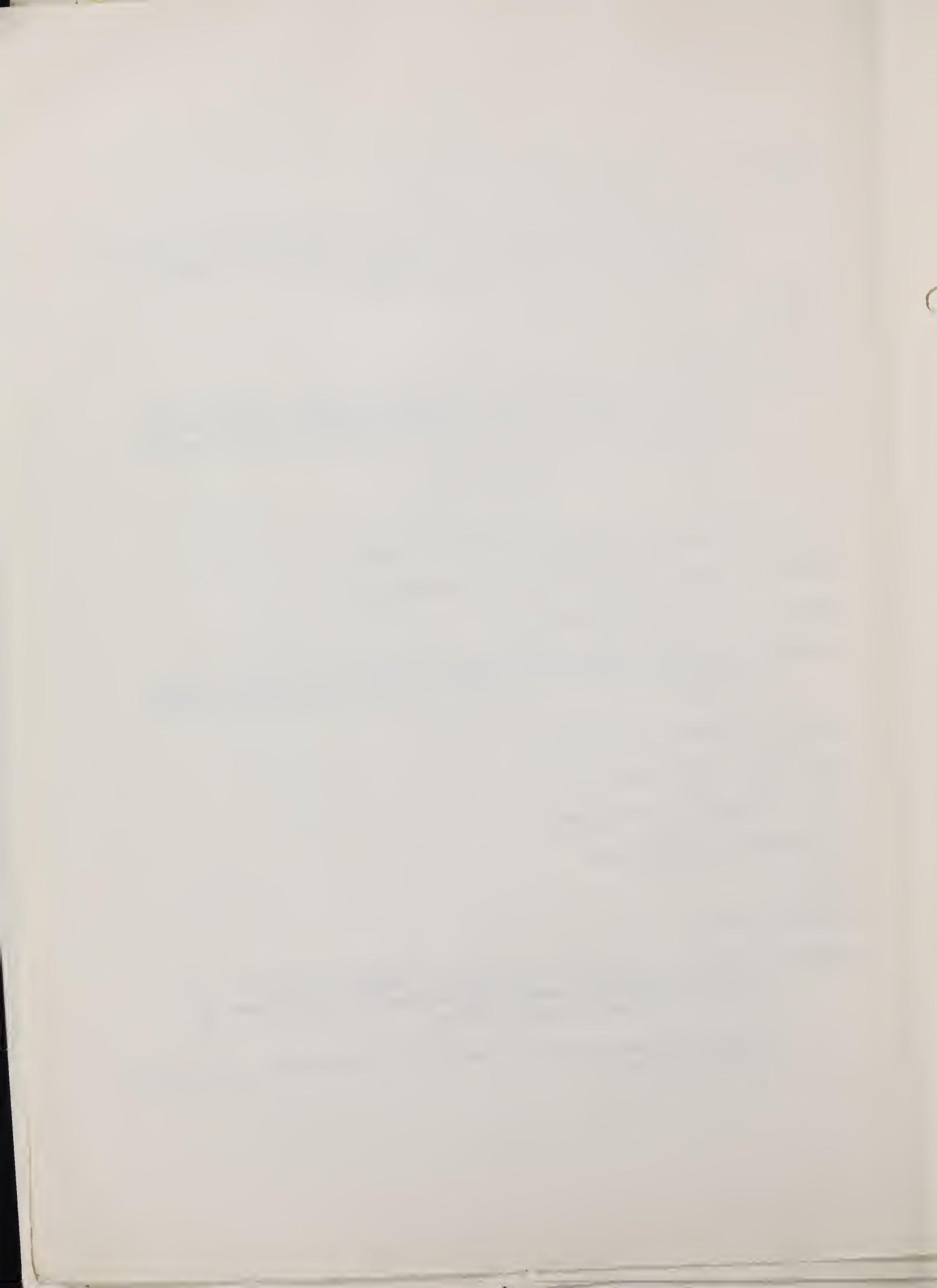
BOOK KEEPING - Spring term.

WRITING

MUSIC AND DRAWING

OBSERVATION LESSONS - (1) Plants: Outline of lessons in Botany. (2) Natural Phenomena: Elementary lessons on topics chosen by pupils; from ten to twenty topics.

Physical exercises shall be conducted in all grades daily throughout the course.



HIGH SCHOOL LATIN COURSE

First YearFIRST TERM

English
General History
Algebra
Latin

SECOND TERM

English
General History
Algebra
Latin

THIRD TERM

English
General History
Algebra
Latin

Second YearFIRST TERM

American Lit.
Geometry
Latin

SECOND TERM

American Lit.
Geometry
Latin

THIRD TERM

American Lit.
Geometry
Latin

Greek, or one study from the English Course

Third YearFIRST TERM

British English
French
Latin

SECOND TERM

British English
French
Latin

THIRD TERM

British English
French
Latin

Greek, or one study from the English Course.

HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH COURSE

First YearFIRST TERM

English
Gen. History
Algebra
Bookkeeping

SECOND TERM

English
Gen. History
Algebra
Bus. Arithmetic

THIRD TERM

English
Gen. History
Algebra
Botany

Second YearFIRST TERM

Amer. Lit.
Geometry
Physics
Physiology

SECOND TERM

American Lit.
Geometry
Physics
Civ. Government

THIRD TERM

American Lit.
Geometry
Physics
Civ. Government



Third YearFIRST TERM

British English
French
Chemistry
Astronomy

SECOND TERM

British English
French
Chemistry
Zoology

THIRD TERM

British English
French
Chemistry
Geology



~~REGULATIONS FOR~~ RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1910

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

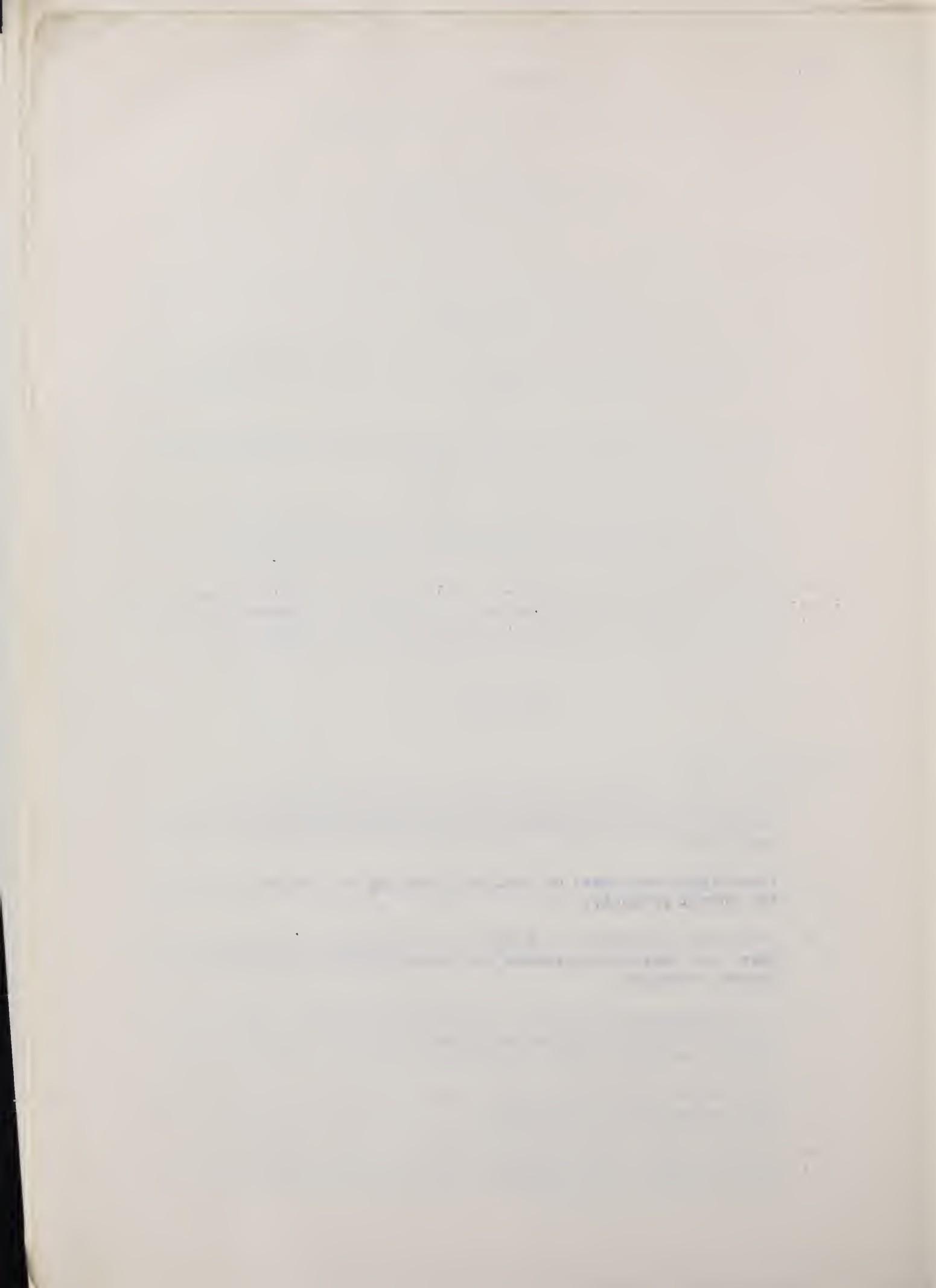
The Superintendent shall:

1. Have the care and supervision of the schools under the direction and control of the School Committee.
2. Visit the schools as often as his other duties will permit, acquire a personal knowledge of their condition, and assist the teachers in the performance of their duties.
3. Attend the meetings of the School Committee, have full charge of the administration of the course of study, the grading of pupils and nomination of teachers for election.
4. Acquaint himself with whatever concerns the interest and progress of public school education and advise the teachers as to the best method of instruction, discipline and school management.
5. Independently of the principal of the school building, inspect the school premises, textbooks and apparatus and report to the Committee any deficiency or conditions unfavorable to the health and progress of the pupils, with suggestions for correction or improvement.

PRINCIPALS

The Principal shall:

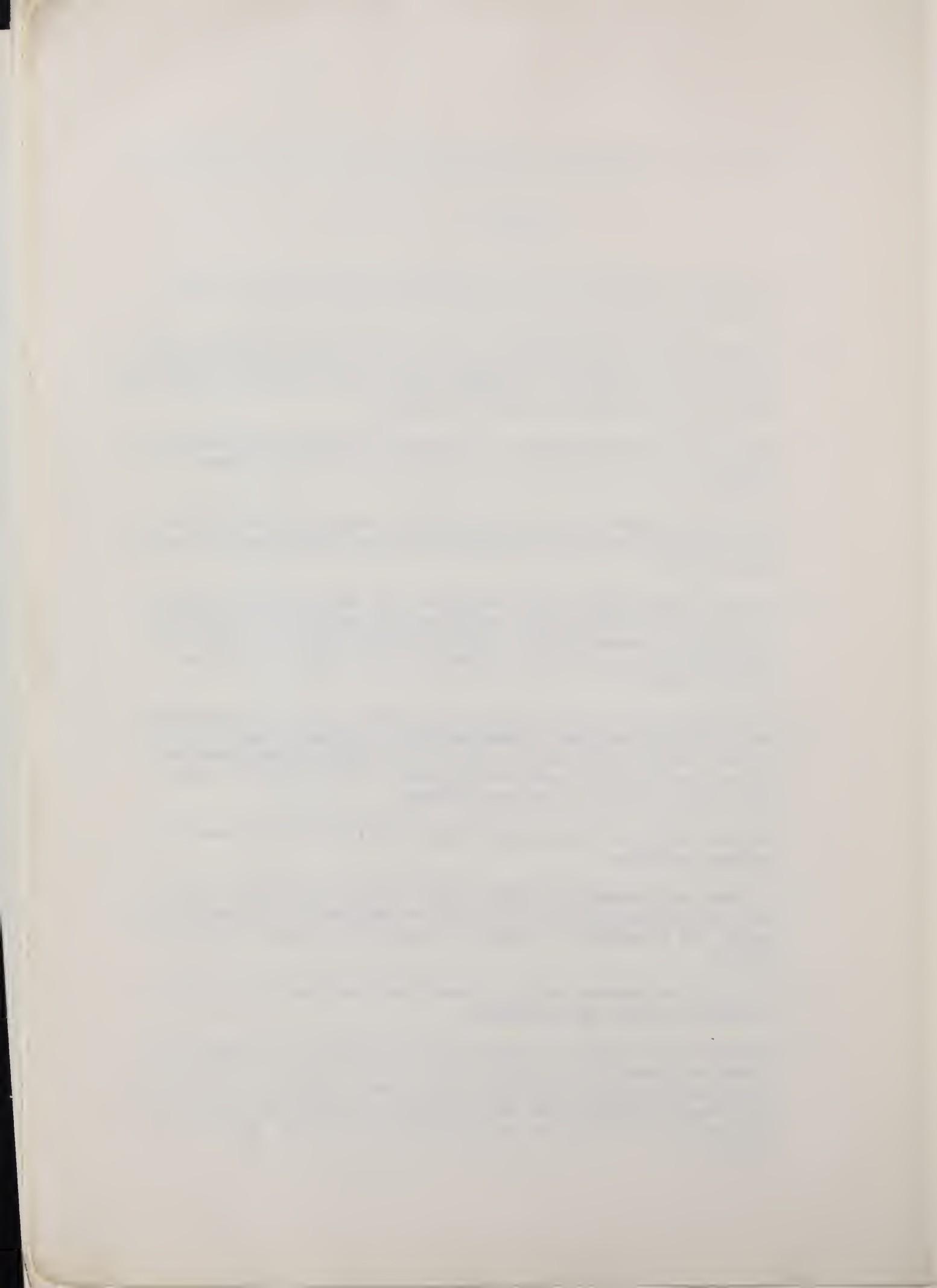
1. Have general charge of the school building and inspect it at regular intervals, reporting to the School Committee any improper condition.
2. Investigate any cases of marking, defacing or otherwise injuring the school property.
3. Ascertain and cause the offender or offenders to be punished, and take such measures to prevent the repetition of such acts as may be deemed necessary.
4. In connection with the other teachers and janitor, plan for the care and control of those pupils who remain for the noon intermission, when the janitor is absent.
5. Have charge of the school flag, and see that it is displayed whenever the weather is suitable.
6. At least twice a month supervise the fire drill of the pupils in their respective buildings and file a monthly report of the same with the School Committee.



7. Receive from the teachers all requisition for school supplies, books, etc., and if approved transmit the same to the School Committee.

TEACHERS

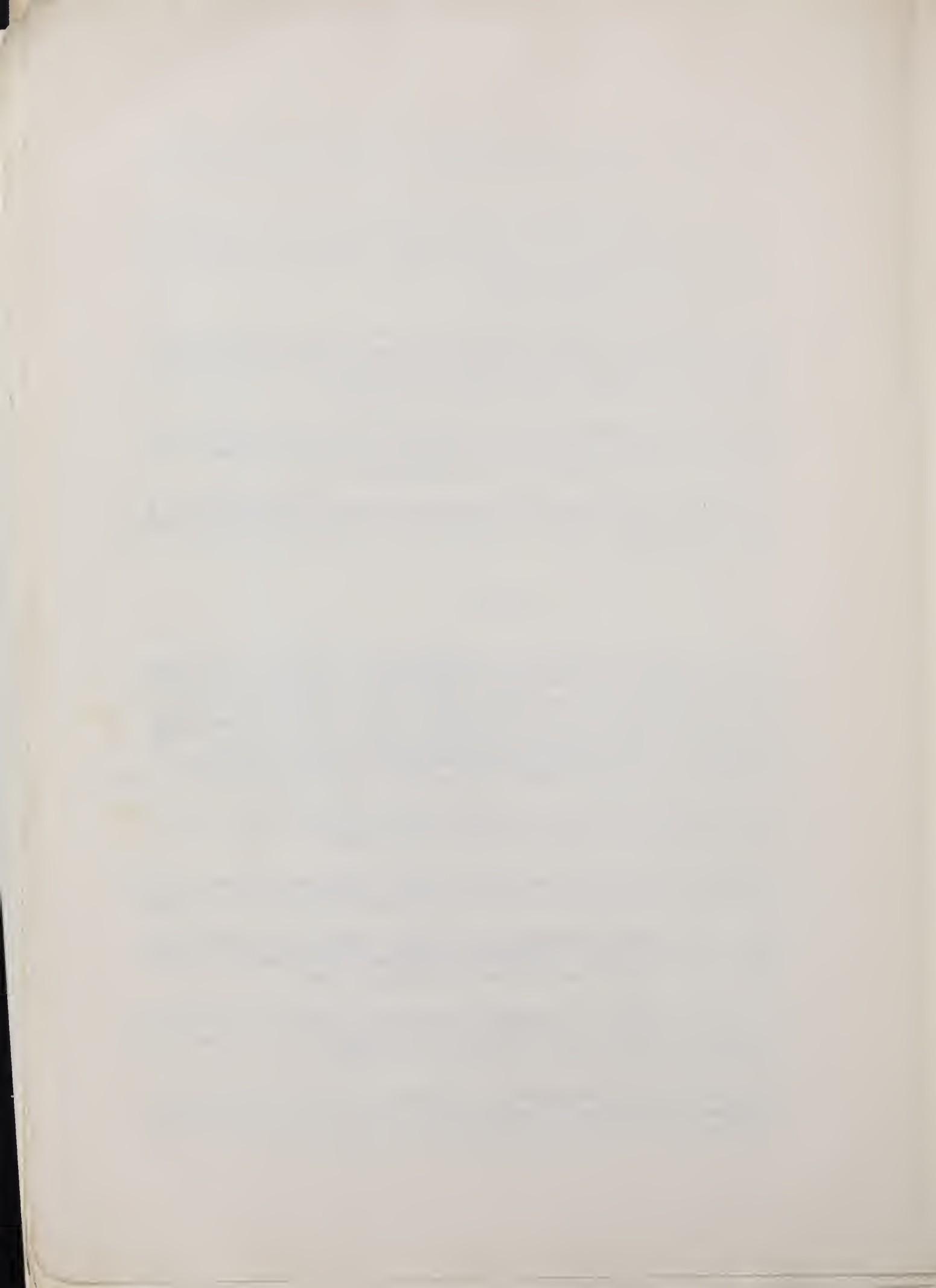
1. Teachers are required to make themselves acquainted with these regulations and to see that they are faithfully observed.
2. Teachers shall be responsible for the strict enforcement and maintenance of discipline of the pupils at all times in their respective school rooms. Corporal punishment blanks to be made out, signed and forwarded to the School Committee monthly.
3. They shall make and render to the School Committee such records and reports as may be required by the Committee or Superintendent of Schools.
4. The teachers must be in their respective rooms at least fifteen minutes before the time of opening both the forenoon and the afternoon session.
5. Teachers must report to the Principal, or, in case of his absence, to the member of the School Committee in charge of the building, all temporary absences from school, and must report to the School Committee the cause of all dismissals of the school before the scheduled time.
6. Teachers are required to give careful attention to the temperature and ventilation of their rooms and secure thorough changes of air at each recess period and at the close of each half-day session. Before leaving their rooms at the close of the afternoon session, they shall close all doors and windows.
7. Teachers shall not during school hours visit with other teachers or other persons.
8. A recess not exceeding fifteen minutes shall be allowed in each half-day period, and no pupil shall be deprived of the entire recess except for misconduct or refusal to study or properly recite his lessons.
9. All cases of truancy shall be immediately reported to the truant officers, through the Principal.
10. Teachers shall require in all cases of absence or tardiness, excuses from parents in person or in writing, which excuses shall be preserved until the end of the school term, subject to the call of the School Committee, and shall furnish the Committee, through the Principal, with a list of absentees from school and excuses given, if any.



11. Teachers shall be allowed one day in each school year to visit other schools and two days each year to attend educational meetings and institutes.
12. Teachers at the beginning of each term shall make up a program of daily study and recitation periods and send a copy to the Superintendent of Schools to be placed on file. After such program of daily study is approved by him, no material change shall be made without his advice and consent.
13. For obstinate opposition to authority, refusal to study and continued neglect of duty or other sufficient reasons, the teacher may suspend a scholar, and shall forthwith notify in writing the parents or guardian, and the School Committee.
14. The enforced absence of a pupil from recitations and from study hours in the daily sessions of a school, or the suspension of a pupil is to be resorted to only in extreme cases.
15. All substituting teachers engaged by the Superintendent shall be paid the regular teacher's salary, and the teacher will be expected to pay the same.

PUPILS

1. Pupils will not be allowed to assemble about the school buildings at an unreasonable time before the opening of school. Under ordinary conditions they shall not enter the building before 8:40 A.M. and after dismissal shall immediately leave the school buildings unless allowed to remain by special consent of the teacher. The Principal of the building may make special rules regarding the foregoing provision, subject to the approval of the School Committee.
2. Children shall be allowed to enter the sub-primary school only at the commencement of the fall term of each year.
3. Pupils shall not enter any hall or room other than the one in which he regularly belongs, except by special permission of his teacher.
4. Every pupil before attending any public school of the Town shall give to the teacher satisfactory evidence of vaccination, or present a physician's certificate, according to law.
5. Pupils behaving in a disorderly manner in or about the building or grounds at recess may be returned to the school room by the teacher and deprived of his recess or other privileges.
6. Any pupil who is suspended by a teacher for any obstinately disobedient and disorderly conduct may, after proper investigation of his behavior by the School Committee be expelled from the schools.



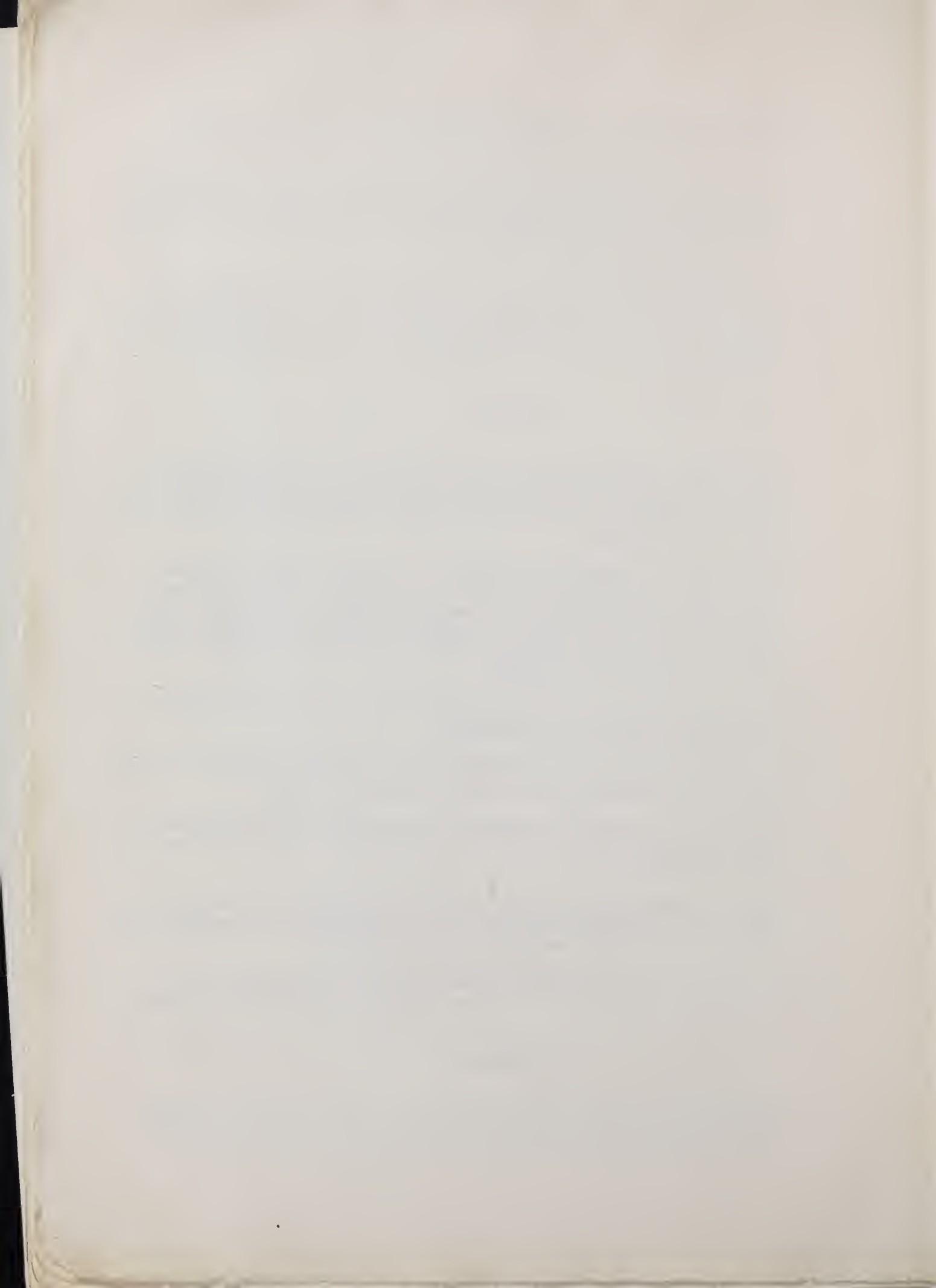
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7. Pupils visiting on the line of electric cars one mile beyond town. Office hours may be allowed our children.
 8. All details of the exercises of graduation and of public examinations of pupils of the High School shall be under the direct supervision and control of the Principal of the High School and School Committee and Principal of Grammar School.
 9. No rubbish of any kind is to be thrown around the building or yard.
 10. Any defacing of school books, or property, or wilful waste of paper, pencils, ink, etc., will be charged for, and pupils required to pay the same.

JANITORS

1. The janitor shall keep the school buildings and furniture neat and clean. The floors and stairways shall be swept not less than five times each week and the furniture shall be dusted with a damp cloth after each sweeping.
2. Fires shall be built when necessary in season to have the rooms warmed to a temperature of at least 65 degrees before the opening of a school. He shall remove from the building all ashes, waste paper, dirt and rubbish and not allow the same to accumulate, place and keep outside the building rubbish boxes or receptacles in the yard to be used by the pupils.
3. He shall wind and regulate all school clocks and see that the flag is displayed on all legal holidays.
4. He shall remove all snow from the steps and walks about the building and keep the steps free and clear from ice and snow.
5. He shall at all times be under the supervision of the Principal of the building, who shall report any violation of these rules to the School Committee.
6. He shall place in the school buildings receptacles for scraps of food in a convenient place for all, and the same to be emptied every night, where it will not attract mice and rats.
7. He shall do such ordinary repairs as his time and ability will allow, at the request of the Superintendent, Committee or teacher.

TRANSPORTATION

1. The driver of every transportation wagon shall provide a comfortable covered conveyance for all pupils attending school from the

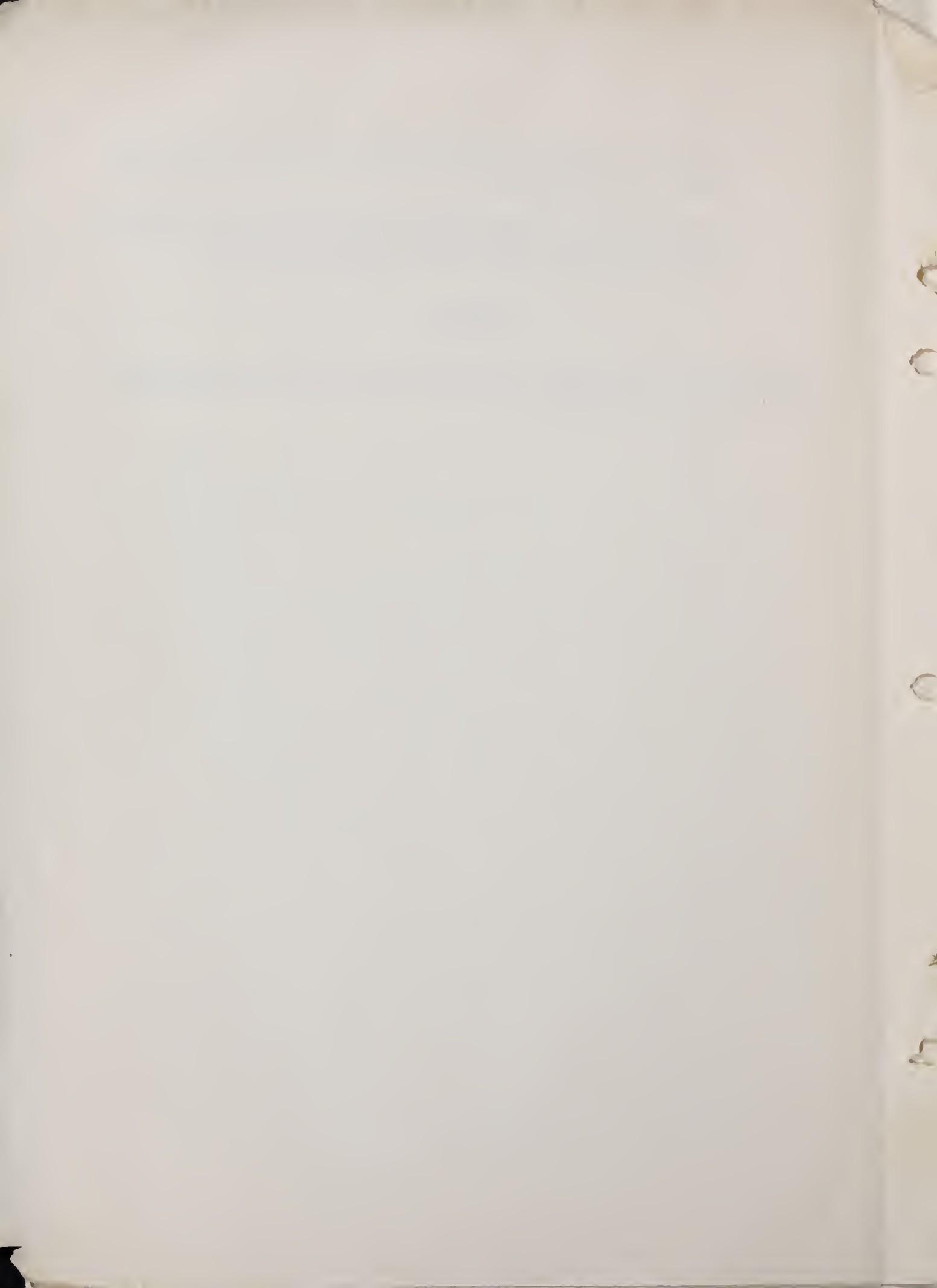


territory covered by the route which he contracts to travel, and shall provide suitable robes or blankets to make the pupils comfortable in cold weather.

2. He shall insist on proper behavior and discipline while the pupils are in his care, and shall have the same authority and care as teachers have while pupils are in the school building.

GENERAL

The "no school" signal shall be one round, 33, on the fire alarm previous to 8 o'clock in the morning.



The information upon which this paper is based has been derived from the Town Records of Sharon, 1765-1957; the Annual Reports of the School Committee, 1844-1957; the History of Sharon written by Amy Rafter Pratt; the manuscript of the late Mrs John Parker; bound volumes of the Sharon Advocate; and the Sharon Scrapbooks compiled by members of the Sharon Historical Society and now in the custody of the Trustees of the Sharon Public Library.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation of the whole-hearted cooperation given me by Mr. Arthur Collins, Town Clerk, and other members of the staff at the Town Hall. I am grateful, also, to the many individuals who have made suggestions for additional materials.

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